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Pantiles declares war on pigeons

HAWK BROUGHT IN TO BE NATURAL PEST CONTROL

By **CHRIS BRITCHER**

chris.britcher@kosmedia.co.uk

TRADERS in the Pantiles have waged war on the 'flying rat' pigeon population by drafting in a bird of prey to scare them off.

Shopkeepers have teamed up to pay for their own winged pigeon patrol in the form of Bodie the hawk.

They hope by scaring the pigeons off it will rid the popular tourist spot from the perils of pigeon poo, which they say is both unsightly and a health hazard.

And Bodie, who flew into action this week along with handler John Parle, from a Penshurst-based pest control company, made such an impression traders say they intend to make him a regular visitor to the Pantiles to keep the pigeons at bay.

Explains Richard Simm, chair of the Association of Pantiles Traders: "One of the downsides of trading in a historic location is there are plenty of nooks for the pigeons to roost.

"Scraps from the restaurants and cafes mean they're also well fed.

"But they're unhygienic and are causing quite a lot of damage to various buildings – so they have to go. We

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PEST CONTROL: Bodie the hawk is scaring off the pigeons

Raise a glass for royal wedding

A COMMEMORATIVE beer has been created to celebrate the royal wedding by a local microbrewery.

Penshurst-based Moodley's Royal Match is described as an elegant and tasteful beer, which reflects the characteristics of Prince William and Kate Middleton.

The hand-crafted real ale is described as pale in colour with a soft creamy head.

The royal couple tie the knot on April 29 at Westminster Abbey.

The man behind the brew is hoping it will provide the perfect tipple for street parties held to mark the wedding and throughout the summer months.

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Polling day a key political event

VOTERS will send a signal on the state of local politics this week as they head to the polls in the Pembury by-election.

Residents will be casting their vote on Thursday, March 17, to decide who should replace Conservative councillor Mike Tompsett. He resigned over his party's treatment of former council leader Roy Bullock.

Conservative candidate William Rutherford, the Liberal Democrats' Claire Brown and UK Independence Party member Victor Webb are in the race to represent the village on Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. Labour is not represented.

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Time for women to get on their bikes

A NEW female-only programme to get women on their bikes and getting fit has been launched at Bedgebury.

The initiative is aimed at women of all ages and abilities to use pedal power at the Forestry Commission-run woodlands near Goudhurst.

Ollie Ireland, the coach at Quench Cycles, Bedgebury's biking shop, said: "These sessions are for women who have spare time during the week and are keen to develop their fitness."

The sessions start at 10am at Quench Cycles on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. An initial session costs £7 and a subsequent block of 10 sessions is £50. This includes bike and helmet hire and a qualified coach for an hour.

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Weather

Today
A windy day. It will be fine at first, as it will be dry with variable amounts of cloud and sunny intervals, hazy at times. Turning increasingly cloudy during the afternoon, with patchy light rain or drizzle expected. A moderate southerly wind. Temperatures a little above the average. Max temp 8-11°C (46-52°F).

Sun & Moon

Sunrise	6.17am	Sunset	5.54pm
Moonrise	9.13am	Moonset	1.25am
Lighting up times: 5.54pm to 6.15am			

High Tides

	today		tomorrow	
	ht (m)	ht (m)	ht (m)	ht (m)
Dover	02:35 5.9	15:05 5.6	03:31 5.5	16:17 5.3
Margate	03:50 4.2	16:06 4.0	04:42 4.0	17:09 3.9
St Mary's	06:42 4.6	21:05 4.5	09:40 4.3	22:16 4.2

Around Britain

	°C	°F		°C	°F		°C	°F			
Aberdeen	rain	6	43	Edinburgh	rain	6	43	Newcastle	cloudy	10	50
Belfast	rain	7	45	Glasgow	drizzle	7	45	Norwich	cloudy	11	52
B'ham	cloudy	11	52	Isle of Man	rain	8	46	Oxford	cloudy	11	52
B'mouth	rain	11	52	Leeds	rain	9	48	Southsea	shows	11	52
Bristol	rain	9	48	London	shows	12	54	S'hampson	shows	11	52
Cardiff	rain	10	50	Liverpool	rain	9	48	S'ampton	shows	11	52
Cork	rain	6	43	Manchester	rain	10	50	Swansea	rain	9	48

Information supplied by **MeteoGroup**

• **EDITOR:** Chris Britcher
• **CHIEF REPORTER:** Jenna Pudelek
• **ADDRESS:** Kenwood House, 1 Upper Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN11 2EL
• **WEBSITES:** www.kentnews.co.uk, www.yourtunbridgewells.co.uk, www.yourtonbridge.co.uk, www.yoursevenoaks.co.uk
• **MOBILE WAP SERVICE:** www.kentnews.co.uk/mobile
• **TELEPHONE:** 01892 779650
• **FAX (ADVERTISING):** 01303 817001
• **EMAIL:** EDITORIAL: tw@kosmedia.co.uk ADVERTISING: sales@kosmedia.co.uk



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Congregation turns its back on the church

CHURCHES have seen their congregations decimated this week after dissident Anglican priests and their parishioners turned to Rome, *writes Jenna Pudelek.*

Ash Wednesday marked the beginning of the exodus in both Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells as worshippers opted instead to celebrate their first mass at Catholic churches.

In Tunbridge Wells, Father Ed Tomlinson led 70 worshippers to join St Anselm's Roman Catholic Church in Pembury, leaving a congregation of just 15 at his former church St Barnabas. Meanwhile, Father Ivan Aquilina took 40 parishioners with him to St Thomas' Roman Catholic Church in Sevenoaks, leaving 50 at the town's St John the Baptist Church.

They join around 600 Anglicans nationally who have decided to leave the Church of England over liberal reforms such as the ordination of women bishops.

Pope Benedict XVI has created a new body called the English Ordinariate for Church of England traditionalists who want to switch allegiance to Rome while retaining some of their Anglican customs.

Father Tomlinson said: "The big day for us was last Sunday when we said goodbye. Wednesday was the beginning of Lent and we are joining with the Catholic Church to celebrate that."

He described this week's move as a "very quiet, tentative first-step" preparing to convert to the Ordinariate for Holy Week at Easter.

The future of St Barnabas in Stanley Road looks bleak now there are just 15 Anglican parishioners left.

"It makes its viability very difficult," Father Tomlinson said. "One of the sad things is that I proposed to the Church of England we might share the building and work together, but the Church of England has been a bit sore about that so we're leaving with nothing."

Integrity

"It is a beautiful building. We've not changed what we teach, what has changed is the wider Church of England, who want to worship in a new and different way, which is why in the end it was an easy decision for us because it was a matter of integrity and standing up for what we believe in."

Father Aquilina spoke about his decision to leave the Church of England and his former church in Quaker's Hall Lane.

"The most important thing that moved me to join the Ordinariate is Jesus – I believe that we have to be faithful to what he said. The Church of England is being changed and I cannot recognise His words any more."

Speaking about the changes in the Church of England, he added: "It is innovation and it is a complete departure."

"We speak now of organic growth and devel-



SWITCH: The move to English Ordinariate is devastating our Anglican churches

opment and that is a beautiful thing, but this is rather starting something completely new.

"Part of that malaise is the ordination of women to the priesthood, but that is just part."

"It is a question of the unity of the church and not working together on these important issues such as re-marrying divorcees and gay marriages. The Church of England is deciding, rather than talking with Christians to find a common decision."

Both have talked about the Church of England "moving the goal posts".

Speaking to this newspaper last year before he had officially made the decision to leave, Father Tomlinson said: "Certainly it is fair to say that it would be very difficult for anyone with genuine Catholic convictions to stay, although some may try and do that for the time being."

"Catholicism in the Church of England is dead beyond a generation. People could stay and enjoy the last few years or could make a radical decision in the short term that would guarantee a better future."

Play it safe by checking your chimney before lighting fires

THE cold snap has seen an increase in chimney fires as residents turn to open fires and wood-burning stoves to keep warm.

But it has prompted fire fighters to issue warnings after a spate of incidents.

Fire chiefs are urging people to ensure their chimneys are swept to prevent build-ups of soot and residue that can spark such blazes.

It comes after fire crews went to 13 chimney fires throughout the county over the last week, including six last weekend.

Blazes broke out in Pembury, Sissinghurst, Paddock Wood, Edenbridge, Headcorn and Langton Green.

Kent Fire and Rescue's head of community safety Stuart Skilton said: "It has been a long

cold winter and we are urging residents with open fires and wood-burning stoves to get chimneys swept and flues checked to ensure they are still safe to use.

"The majority of these types of fires are preventable and the risk of damage to your home and injuries to loved ones can be reduced just by ensuring chimneys are swept regularly, heating appliances are properly installed and that only the correct fuel is burned."

There were also fires in Ashford, East Malling and Upnor. Meanwhile, in the east of the county, firefighters attended calls in Westgate, Sandgate, Whitstable and Ramsgate.

Advice to avoid chimney fires includes

sweeping your chimney at least once a year and more frequently if you burn wood, making sure the appliance receives enough air to allow the fuel to burn properly and only burning suitable fuels.

Firefighters said it was important not to overload the grate or appliance used. Residents were urged to use a fire or spark guard to prevent accidental fires and to make sure the chimney breast is not damaged so that sparks or fumes can escape through cracks or broken bricks.

Other advice included not storing items in the roof space close to your chimney, fitting a carbon monoxide detector and a smoke alarm on each floor of your home.

Hawk brought in to scare pigeons from Pantiles

Continued from front page

hope John and Bodie manage to drive them off and provide a natural and humane solution to the problem."

The traders stress the aim is not to harm the pigeons, but simply ruffle a few feathers and encourage them to live elsewhere.

It was the damage to the stonework of the statues and buildings around Trafalgar Square in London that led then-Mayor Ken Livingstone to ban the feeding of pigeons within the square in 2003.

This was later backed by Westminster City

Council, which banned the feeding of pigeons in the surrounding area.

The resulting drop in the number of the birds has allowed the world famous site to now be used for festivals and hired out to film companies – something that was previously impossible. The traders on the Pantiles hope they can accomplish a similar pigeon reduction.

A spokeswoman for the new committee of the Association of Pantiles Traders explained: "We have been working hard to expand the calendar of events for 2011. A food festival,

fashion fair and involvement in events that form the Electric Lantern Festival, the town's first arts festival, are all being planned, as well as being an established venue for Local and Live, the Summer Jazz Nights and the regular markets. The pigeons do little to enhance these events."

"We were inspired by a recent episode of BBC's Human Planet – where a falcon kept Dubai free from pigeons."

• **What do you think of using a hawk to scare off the pigeons? Let us know your views. Email tw@kosmedia.co.uk.**

'Elegant' ale ideal with street party fare, says creator

Toast royal couple with wedding brew

By **JENNA PUDELEK**

jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

A COMMEMORATIVE beer has been created by a microbrewery to celebrate the royal wedding.

Penshurst-based Moodley's Royal Match is described as an elegant and tasteful beer, which reflects the characteristics of Prince William and Kate Middleton.

The hand-crafted real ale is described as pale in colour with a soft creamy head.

Head brewer and owner Yudhista Moodley said: "I started off imagining street parties and ideally a warm April day.

"I imagined what beer would go really well if you had an array of salads and pork pies, summery food.

"I thought it has got to be a fairly pale, light beer, probably quite fragrant, with lots of hops."

The result is made using English and German hops, Admiral and Hallertau Mittelfrau respectively. It has an ABV of 3.2 per cent.

Mr Moodley is hoping it will provide the perfect tipple for street parties held on the bank holiday to celebrate the royal wedding and throughout the summer months.

"I like my beers to appeal to both men and women," he said. "They tend not to be too heavy or too traditional in many ways.

"This has a nice bouquet and smells quite flowery. It tastes quite light with some good hoppy notes."

Mr Moodley's decision to create the beer to mark the royal couple's special day on April 29 has followed a long tradition of commemorative royal brews.

"Historically, royal events have always been marked with commemorative beers," he said.

"When Prince Charles married Lady Diana Spencer in 1981, 147 brewers created special brews, and at the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977, more than 70 regional breweries created a commemorative drink.

"We therefore, wanted to do something to mark the royal wedding of 2011 and play our part in history."

There has always been a strong link between beer and weddings, dating back more than 4,000 years, he said.

The word 'bridal' comes from bride ale – a special beer homebrewed to celebrate weddings.

Mr Moodley added: "Enjoying a Royal Match on April 29 will be the perfect way to toast the royal couple's future happiness and we intend to send William and Kate a crate of Royal Match for them to enjoy on their honeymoon."

Royal Match joins the other five brews in the Moodley's portfolio; its signature Toad Rock bitter, Poundage Porter, Pantiles Porter, Penshurst Pleasure and Smockham Ale.

And if you want to taste the special beer ahead of the big day, Moodley's Royal Match is on sale now, priced at

£2.20 a bottle.



CHEERS: The wedding of Kate Middleton and Prince William will be celebrated across the UK

Disputes on TV

A TV documentary series about neighbourhood disputes is looking for Tunbridge Wells residents to take part.

The makers of Channel 4's Embarrassing Bodies and How to Look Good Naked will be following the work of people involved in community mediation.

If you are having trouble with your neighbours whether it is about noises keeping you up at all hours, parking, or the size of a garden fence and you live in Tunbridge Wells the producers want to hear from you. Email mediators@mavericktv.co.uk or call 0121 224 8359.

Gateway hours

OPENING times of the council-run Tunbridge Wells Gateway will change from April 2.

The Gateway in Grosvenor Road will now open at 9am on Saturdays, in line with the rest of the week, but will close earlier at 1.30pm.

Council chiefs say research shows the number of visits after 1pm on a Saturday drops dramatically, while there is a demand for earlier opening.

A spokesman said: "Residents can get their council business out of the way first thing, leaving the rest of the day to enjoy the town."

Traffic surveys

TRAFFIC surveys on North Farm finally get under way this week as part of a project to try and solve the current congestion problems.

Working in partnership with Kent County Council, and with the support of MP Greg Clark, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council commissioned the North Farm Traffic Study.

The survey will focus on key junctions within the North Farm estate and should be completed this week.

The study should be finished by June when plans to ease the jams will be put before council.

Grace off to Crufts with her magic dog Merlin

A YOUNG girl with autism whose life has been transformed by her talented pet will appear before thousands with her trusty hound at Crufts this weekend.

Grace Brown-Griffin, 10, and Merlin, a Springer-Labrador cross, who live in Langton Green, are among the five finalists in the 'friends for life' category and will take to the arena on Sunday.

Crufts is the UK's top annual dog show and runs from March 10 to this Sunday at Birmingham's NEC.

"Merlin has definitely totally changed her life," her mother Tony said. "Grace has autism and attention deficit hyperactive disorder, which makes her a 'lively' child.

"She wasn't reading or writing, but Merlin helps her calm down and provides her with a focus. She can now read and write and is learning to draw."

Voted for by members of the public, the section of the competition celebrates heart-warming stories in which dogs have proven to be man's best friend and changed people's lives for the better.

Merlin was trained at the Sheffield-based charity Support Dogs, which provides animals to assist people with a wide variety of disabilities.

If Grace is outside and starts to panic, he will play up to get her attention and distract her, Mrs Brown-Griffin said.

The youngster also had a tendency to leave home without warning, but now a special alarm has been installed, which Merlin triggers with his paw if Grace tries to leave, alerting her parents.

If the pair win at the dog show organised by the Kennel Club, they will take part in a ceremony broadcast live on TV, when host Kate Silverton will present the trophy.

Coverage of Crufts is shown on the More4 channel.

Voting for the Friends for Life winner is under way and will close at 7.30pm on Sunday, the final night of the competition.

If you would like to register your vote for Grace and Merlin call 0844 646 0205. Calls cost 5p from a BT landline.



Mother's Day Lunch at High Rocks

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Main courses with fresh vegetables & potatoes

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COFFEE & MINTS

VEGETARIAN MAIN COURSE

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Cannabis farm: three arrested

MORE than 500 cannabis plants have been discovered during a police raid in west Kent.

Three men have been arrested for cultivating cannabis after a warrant was executed at a property in Transfesa Road, Paddock Wood on March 1.

A 38-year-old from Tonbridge and a 31-year-old and a 37-year-old from London have been bailed while investigations continue.

The plants were in various stages of growth and have been destroyed by officers.

Festival at castle

A FESTIVAL of music and fireworks is back at Tonbridge Castle this summer, and it has a new classical theme.

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council is working with Opera Brava to deliver three performances in July and tickets are on sale now.

Events include The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, The Magic Flute by Mozart and a Candlelit Gala Concert.

Book tickets at www.operabrava.co.uk or call 01444 443000.

Praise for school

A PRIMARY school has improved its standards and achieved a 'good' report, according to Ofsted inspectors.

The report into Cranbrook Primary School praised its "outstanding curriculum", which is supporting pupils' basic development at a "rapidly-improving pace".

Tom Tiffin, chair of the governors, said: "We are thrilled with this result. It is a testament to the hard work and commitment of the school's staff and governors."

Ambulance depot 'to improve 999 service'

CONSTRUCTION work is set to begin on a state-of-the-art depot for ambulances across west Kent, writes Jenna Pudelek.

The NHS ambulance trust, which covers Kent, Surrey and Sussex, said plans to create its first 'make ready' depot moved a step closer, after it signed the lease for the industrial unit in Paddock Wood.

South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SECAmb) said contractors would move on to the site in Eldon Way "shortly".

The depot will serve ambulances working in Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, Cranbrook, Crowborough and Maidstone, and is set to open this summer.

It has proved controversial and concerns have been raised about the loss of existing ambulance stations in Tunbridge Wells, Cranbrook, Edenbridge and Crowborough.

However, SECAmb has said the depot will "significantly enhance and improve" services.

A spokeswoman for the trust said: "It minimises the risk of cross-infection; frees up front-line staff, who currently clean and restock ambulances, to spend more time treating patients; and keeps vehicles on the road for longer."

"The initiative ensures that specially-trained operatives regularly deep-clean, restock and check vehicles for mechanical faults."



FAST: Response times should be improved as result of new depot

The depot will be supported by a network of ambulance community response posts (ACRP).

Staff currently working in Cranbrook, Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, Crowborough and Maidstone will start and end their shifts at the new depot. But during their shifts, ambulances will respond to incidents from the community response posts.

The trust said that work was under way so the new ACRPs were open when the new depot become operational.

In Tunbridge Wells, the trust has not found a suitable site. The spokeswoman said: "Until a site is located, crews will continue to respond from a post on the site of the current ambulance station."

In Sevenoaks, a site has been identified and negotiations are under way with the owner, and in Tonbridge, the current ambulance station will act as a community response post.

Cranbrook will see a new community response post developed on the grounds of

the rugby club and in Crowborough, a site has been found and negotiations with a land owner are taking place. It is hoped that a planning application will be submitted soon.

In Edenbridge, work is to start on creating a permanent post at the minor injuries unit.

A community response post has been running at Springfield House in north Maidstone for some time, the trust said. In south Maidstone the trust plans to use part of the current ambulance station, with some of the land being disposed of.

"The trust intends to introduce 10 response posts," the spokeswoman said. "This will be considerably more than the number of stations currently in this area, therefore improving services for patients."

She said many of the existing stations had been built more than 30 years ago and were no longer suitable to provide a timely response.

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Missing Lottery ticket holder could be you ...

A LOTTERY prize of £82,500 has gone unclaimed, and draw chiefs are urging players to check their tickets.

The prize ticket was bought in the Tonbridge and Malling area and the search is now on to find the winner.

If the prize is not claimed before the summer, it will be lost and the money donated to good causes.

The owner matched five numbers and the bonus ball in the Lotto draw on February 19, when the winning numbers were six, 16, 26, 32, 34, 46 and the bonus ball was 33.

A National Lottery spokesperson said:

"We're desperate to find this mystery ticket-holder and unite them with their winnings - this amazing prize could really make a huge difference to somebody's life. We're urging everyone to check their old tickets again or look anywhere a missing ticket could be hiding."

"Try checking the pockets of clothing, wallets, bags and down the back of the sofa - someone out there could literally be sitting on a fortune. We have the Champagne on ice and our fingers crossed that the lucky winner comes forward."

The lucky ticket holder has until 5.30pm on August 18 to make their claim.

If no one comes forward with the winning ticket before the deadline, then

the prize money, plus all the interest it has generated, will go to the Good Causes - adding to the £25 billion already raised through sales of lottery tickets since The National Lottery was launched in November 1994.

Anyone who believes they have the winning ticket for any of the National Lottery draws within the 180-day deadline should call the National Lottery Line on 0845 910 0000.



By-election may pave way for local results

By **JENNA PUDELEK**

jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

VOTERS will send a clear signal on the state of at least three of the main political parties this week as they head to the polls in the Pembury by-election.

On Thursday, residents will vote on who should replace Conservative councillor Mike Tompssett.

He resigned over his party's treatment of former council leader Roy Bullock.

Conservative candidate William Rutherford, the Liberal Democrats' Claire Brown and UK Independence Party (UKIP) member Victor Webb are in the race to represent the village on Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. Labour is not represented.

The by-election comes at a fascinating time in both local and national politics, and may send a clear sign of how votes will be cast on May 5, when the main local elections take place.

It is entwined with the internal wrangling of the town's Tory group and the wider disquiet among residents that led to Cllr Bullock being ousted as leader, by a vote of no confidence against him by his own party. Mr Tompssett is said to be unhappy that his party deselected Cllr Bullock in his Lamberhurst and Goudhurst ward, meaning he cannot stand as a Tory in the May borough elections.

Reflecting on the recent troubles of his party, Mr Rutherford said: "Changes of leadership are rarely a smooth process, and it has been unfortunate that in Tunbridge Wells it has been so public.

"However, the process is now complete and Bob Atwood has brought a transparent and open style of leadership. I am sure that this will be a positive factor at this by-election, and at the regular council elections this May.

"Among the big issues Pembury will face in



CANDIDATES: William Rutherford (Con), Claire Brown (Lib Dem) and Victor Webb (UKIP)

the next few years is the dualling of the A21, the campaign for the Colts Hill bypass and the expansion of Tesco, with its proposed park-and-ride scheme.

"These will all have a tremendous impact on the village, and Pembury will need a team with a track record of success in defending our community's interests."

Lib Dem candidate Ms Brown, who lives in The Glebe and is the only candidate to actually live in Pembury, said: "The Liberal Democrats have played an active role in campaigning and looking out for the best interests of Pembury and the surrounding villages for many years, and will continue to do so for many years to come.

"All in all, I would say that I don't just understand residents' concerns, but as one of those residents myself, I live the concerns. I feel I would be representing from my heart, not a clipboard."

Mr Rutherford said: "While it's true I don't live within the ward, this is also the case for several other councillors from both parties across Tunbridge Wells.

"What is important for any councillor is that they have the skills, ability and commitment to be an advocate at borough level for the community they represent, to engage with local groups and individuals, and to be an effective communicator."

UKIP's Mr Webb, who lives in Ashdown

Close, said he was born in Pembury Hospital and has lived in Tunbridge Wells.

He said: "The former councillor resigned not because he could not do something for Pembury, but because the leader of the council was voted out.

"We urgently need an independent voice."

He also criticised the council's "flog-it policy". He said if elected he would support frontline services, fight for local bus services and campaign against parking charges at the new hospital at Pembury.

Mr Webb was critical of the council's partnership with developers John Laing – The Tunbridge Wells Regeneration Company.

He said: "They have said there are 38 sites identified for development, but they have only disclosed 15 sites. I'm concerned about the other ones when they are talking about flogging woods and forests."

Burglars hit four homes in one day

FOUR homes on the same road have been burgled on the same day, with computers, cameras and alcohol among the items stolen.

Police have appealed for information after the burglaries, at houses on the A229 at Sissinghurst Common between 7am and 6.25pm last Wednesday, March 2. In all cases rear windows were smashed to gain entry.

Detective Constable Neil Martin said: "We are following a number of lines of inquiry and forensic evidence is being examined."

Anyone with information should call police on 01732 379217 or Kent Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Counterfeit case

A MAN has been charged with fraud after a shopkeeper reported someone trying to use a fake £20 note.

Police were alerted through Tonbridge's Shop Safe scheme that someone had tried to use what was believed to be counterfeit money at a store in the High Street.

A search found a number of £20 notes thought to be fake, which police confiscated.

A 33-year-old man from Sittingbourne has now been charged and bailed to appear at court on March 21.

Local wine offer

A NEW off-licence has opened in London Road, Sevenoaks – and by showing them this article you can make some great savings.

The independently-run Thind Wine Merchants will offer a range of wines and beers from around the world, as well as teaming up with Biddenden Vineyard to provide locally-grown wine too.

Readers taking this article into the store can receive a 10 per cent discount.

Grammars 'not the way to climb social ladder'

WORKING class children are no more likely to climb the social ladder by attending grammar schools rather than comprehensives, new research suggests, *writes Steve Knight*.

Kent has more grammar schools than any other county in the UK, and is one of only a handful that still operates a selective system.

But using a sample of more than 3,300 adults from across the UK, academics from the universities of Oxford and Bath Spa found that poorer children who attended comprehensives were just as likely as their grammar school equivalents to land better jobs than their parents.

Rebecca Matthews – chairwoman of the Stop the Eleven Plus campaign group in Kent – said the findings of the report came as little surprise.

"It's an interesting piece of research, but the idea that grammar schools provide social mobility is a myth anyway," she added.

"The researchers used data from people now in their 50s, so when they went to school the whole country would have been using the selective system that Kent has held on to.

"The situation now is so different, because even fewer working class children go to grammar school. Tutoring has a significant effect on whether a child passes a test or not, and only middle-class people can afford it."

Of the 3,300 people studied in the report, a third had attended comprehensive schools, a quarter had attended grammar schools, and two-fifths had been educated in a secondary modern.

The researchers compared the jobs the adults did at the age of 33 with the work their fathers had done 17 years earlier – when the adults were 16 – and analysed the results to see whether they had climbed the social ladder.

All those in the sample had sat a test to measure their academic ability at the age of 11.

Co-author Adam Swift said that grammar schools "confer no more advantage" to working-class children than to those from slightly more wealthy backgrounds, which Kent education expert Peter Read said demonstrated the weakness of the report.

"That is to say both categories do have an advantage," he said. "Why should they give more advantage to one group than the other?"

"In fact, those of the sample who went to comprehensive schools were part of the initial wave of comprehensives, before the great abolition of grammar schools which took place in the 1970s and 80s.

"It is self-evident in nearly every wave of educational change that the first into the fray were idealistic and made it work. I wonder if the results would hold true today."



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THE INTERVIEW

BY NICK AMES

Bad Girl stripping back the 'glamour' of pole-dancing

THE prospect of a play entitled *The Naked Truth*, which features pole-dancing as its central theme, should be enough to get the blood racing – but any such idea is firmly misplaced, according to actress Claire King.

The woman, who is best known as Emmerdale vamp Kim Tate, said: "People may think pole-dancing is glamorous – well, I can say it isn't, and I've got the bruises to prove it."

"We had four or five lessons beforehand, which was a good idea."

"I have done a lot of horse-riding and swimming, so I am naturally quite fit, and you need good upper-body strength for some of the moves. But I also have some problems with arthritis."

"I have done *Strictly* [Come Dancing] with Brendan Cole as my partner, and that did help – but learning the foxtrot is a bit different from pole-dancing."

King, also known for her role of Karen Betts in *Bad Girls*, is taking to the stage at the Assembly Hall Theatre in Tunbridge Wells, alongside Liberty X star Michelle Heaton, in a show she says is a cross between *The Full Monty* and *Calendar Girls*.

"It's funny, moving and uplifting all at the same time," says King.

The play features five women struggling to conquer the art of pole-dancing for a charity event to raise funds for breast cancer research.

The show is, in real life, part of a tour supporting the UK Cancer Research Race For Life.

King's character is called Rita, and her story is explored in depth during the production.

"Rita is a woman who has been abused by her husband – not physically, verbally – but he was very threatening."

Confidence

"The women are all taking up pole-dancing for a reason. For some it may be empowerment, others may not have confidence in their bodies."

"The character Sarah [played by Maureen Nolan, formerly of The Nolans pop group] has breast cancer and problems with her husband."



UPLIFTING: Claire King, left, stars as Rita in *The Naked Truth*, a production which both features and supports Cancer Research

"Maureen really knows about cancer as three of her sisters had breast cancer."

"All the women in the show are doing what they are doing for a reason. Off-stage, we all get on very well and have a good laugh."

"When you're touring and booted out of your digs at 11am waiting to get to the theatre for six, you need to get on."

The show is aimed principally at women, but King says men can certainly enjoy it, too.

"I had a coachload come to one performance from my local pub [in Harrogate], and that was 50-50, men and women," she said.

"The men enjoyed it as much as the women. They said maybe it had the feel of a hen night about it, but said they enjoyed the pole-dancing and learned something too."

King has also starred on stage in the *Vagina Monologues*, alongside Jerry Hall. Her other TV credits include *Hollyoaks*, *Doctors* and *Holby City*.

But her favourite role was that of Emmerdale's manipulative villain, Kim Tate. "I spent most of the time horse-riding, which I love, so that was great. Also, everyone enjoys playing a baddie – it's good fun."

As someone who has been in showbusiness an impressive amount of time, King says she has noticed a change over the last decade.

"Nowadays there is just not as much work around for actresses and actors," she said.

"There is not as much drama being made. That, I feel, is down to reality TV. It's so much cheaper to make."

"I know I did *Strictly*, but that way I got to do something new. I would never just want to sit around all day [in front of the cameras]."

"Maybe that is why there are so many people slogging around the circuit. But that's not how I feel. I love this show and am really looking forward to playing Tunbridge Wells."

"It's a pity it's just one night, otherwise I would have enjoyed having a look around the town."

• *The Naked Truth* is being performed at the Assembly Hall Theatre in Tunbridge Wells on Monday, March 21. Tickets are priced at £18.50 (concessions available); phone the box office on 01892 530613/532072 or visit www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk.

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Girl, 12, stuns



By **JENNA PUDELEK**

jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

AN IMAGE taken by a 12-year-old girl using a cheap mobile device has caused quite a stir among the photographic community.

Isi Nash's atmospheric picture of a wedding dress in a shop window overlaid by the shadow of a nearby tree was entered in the latest Tunbridge Wells Photowalk competition.

She topped the award for the best photograph taken using a mobile device, and her work has been praised by other winners, among them some of the area's top photographers.

Isi's entry, taken with a low-res video camera, and that of her friend, Jasmine O'Callaghan, also 12, have so inspired the local photographic community that there are now plans for a special Photowalk using only mobile devices.

James Galpin, one category winner, said: "I feel humbled looking at Isi's photo, it was one of the best shots in this exhibition... yet it was taken on a mobile camera by a 12-year old-girl. That's marvellous, it's what photography and indeed the Photowalk is all about."

The event is organised by local Twitter groups Twuttle and Twuddle, businesses and photographers. Photowalk is set to return in the summer with a number of events, including a similar competition in Crowborough to coincide with the town's art festival.

Paul Lesson, of the Wobblybridge Gallery in Camden Road, where the images were displayed last month, said: "We love hosting the

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Photowalk judges

Photowalk at our gallery. The event is all about the local community, not just the photographic elite. That's why I love the idea of shooting just on phones. It's vibrant and a real leveller."

Photowalk organiser Mike Goode said: "It's interesting how young people use their mobile phones as cameras without even pausing to think."

"And phones are excellent at capturing the moment, which after all is a large part of what photography is all about. Isi's winning shot is testimony to that approach."

Overall Photowalk winner and prominent local photographer Carl Abrams said: "When the girls' images were displayed in the exhibition at Wobblybridge, the organisers deliberately didn't include any details of who took them."

"So when I discovered Isi and Jasmine's photos were taken on mobile phones, I was stunned. It shows where photography will perhaps be heading in the next few years. But more than that, it shows that having an eye for a great image is paramount."

Other winners in different categories of cameras included James Shooter's classic black and white landscape, which won the image shot using non-digital cameras.

Rupert Wilmot's doorway in Monson Road topped the digital manipulation award, by impressing judges with the way he saturated the colours to produce an image that looks more Marrakesh than downtown Tunbridge Wells.

Neil Spalding's shot of a traffic warden enforcing parking regulations taken to the



brief 'The Spirit of Christmas' won the special judges' award.

For more information about future Photowalks visit www.twuttle.com or email mike@hophousedesign.co.uk.

WINNERS: From top: James Shooter's landscape; Rupert Wilmot's Doorway and Neil Spalding's Spirit of Christmas captured the judges' imagination. Opposite is Celebration, by Isi Nash, which was taken on a mobile phone video camera



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Raising awareness of Fairtrade fabric

A COMMUNITY art installation is being created using brightly-coloured bunting made from ethical cotton to showcase Fairtrade products, *writes Jenna Pudelek*.

The artwork, made by Tunbridge Wells schoolchildren, will mark this year's Fairtrade Fortnight and its theme 'show off your label'.

Jane Clarke, from the Tunbridge Wells Fairtrade Town Group, said: "Cotton farmers in West Africa in particular are struggling to compete on world markets, because of subsidised cotton from America and the EU."

"What we love about Fairtrade is that it has such a positive impact on individual farmers and their communities, and we as individuals have the power to bring about this change simply by what we choose to buy."

This year's awareness-raising fortnight, which ends on Sunday, has focused on Fairtrade cotton sales, which have been declining as ethical ranges struggle to compete with the increasing trend for cheap, fast fashion.

For most farmers in cotton-producing communities, it is their only means of income and their only cash crop. In West Africa, cotton makes up to 40 per cent of export income, but many cotton farmers also live in poverty – trying to survive on less than \$2 (£1.20) a day.



CHOICE: Fairtrade cotton helps farmers

Although Fairtrade cotton has been available for some time, still less than one per cent of cotton fashion on the high street carries the Fairtrade mark, which guarantees a minimum price and premium for investment in social development projects.

Young people from 20 local schools have been taking part in creating the installation, which is set to go on display in Calverley Precinct on Tuesday.

The Fairtrade Town Group has also celebrated the successful renewal of the town's Fairtrade status.

A certificate was presented to the new leader of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Bob Attwood, earlier this month.

To maintain the status the group has to audit local shops and cafes selling Fairtrade goods and keep the support of the council, schools, faith groups, community groups and businesses.

Ms Clarke added: "Despite the recession, local firm Brewers has provided all the paint for the community art project."

Two of the schools in the art project, Bennett Memorial and St Gregory's are working towards Fairtrade School Status.

A LIFE-sized statue of a deer has been stolen from the back garden of a house in Hildenborough.

Police said the theft of the bronze-effect doe deer was taken some time between midnight on February 23 and 10am on February 27.

The statue is heavy and it is thought that more than one person would have been needed to move it from the garden in Coldharbour Lane. If you have any information about the incident call police on 01732 379217 or Kent Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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Soldier reports on Afghan tour

By **JENNA PUDELEK**

jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

A SOLDIER soon to return home after a six-month tour of Afghanistan has spoken about the highs and lows of life on the frontline.

Trooper Daniel Dowling, 19, from Dunton Green, near Sevenoaks, is serving in Helmand Province with the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment.

As a gunner on a Mastiff armoured fighting vehicle, Tpr Dowling patrols the roads, acting as a visible deterrent to the insurgents.

"I've not spent as much time chatting to the local people as I'd like, because we are the Mastiff Group and we work from vehicles," he said.

"But every time I have had the chance to talk it has been a different experience. Most of the locals are friendly and just want to get on with their lives."

The armoured vehicles work to allow the local Afghans to go about their lives in relative peace, he said.

It has been Tpr Dowling's first active tour of duty overseas since he joined the Army. He admitted it had been tough and that he had



RETURN: Trooper Daniel Dowling

missed his family. He is due to return in a few weeks and is looking forward to seeing his family, driving his car and relaxing with friends in his local, the Duke's Head.

Tpr Dowling said the most rewarding part of his tour so far was being part of a check point where he guarded the roads against insurgents.

"The rewarding part of this operation was when a local family started to recognise our vehicle and they became very friendly."

"They tried their best to have a conversation with us, plus in the mornings when they started work on their farm we would always get a friendly wave and a hello in Pashtu."

His job is to man the Mastiff's machine gun turret and look for any threat to the vehicle crew. He said he works long hours at all times of the day and night, which are mostly spent standing behind his weapon.

"Considering where we are, we live pretty well," he said. "The forward operating base I am working out of is very well equipped. We have a small shop for luxuries, but, more importantly, there are hot showers, which are a huge privilege compared to what some of the guys have to live with."

"Sharing a tent with nine others is quite stressful at times, but we have made the best of things. We all have our own personal space but we don't hide away – we listen to music, watch films together and there is always a lot of time for banter, which is great for morale."

Tpr Daniel Dowling and his comrades from the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment will celebrate their return from Helmand by marching through Maidstone on September 1.

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JULIE MADDOCKS

Stuck on the information highway

IT WAS music to my ears to hear that Ofcom is seeking to stop internet service providers from advertising unrealistic broadband speeds.

Many advertise services as 'up to' a certain speed – for instance, 20Mbps (megabits per second).

But the Office of Communications has found that very few consumers actually get these headline speeds.

According to the regulator's research, "there is a substantial gap between advertised speeds and those people actually get in their homes".

Ofcom chief executive Ed Richards added: "The chances of someone receiving the advertised headline speed are fairly remote."

You're not kidding – they could have nipped round to ours and found that out.

All has been far from good in the Maddocks household recently, as far as this technology

is concerned, and all because we changed our telephone and internet provider.

Following our house move, we had to change our phone number, so thought it the ideal time to shop around for a 'better deal' and improve our telecom services.

With so much competition from providers now offering a range of brilliant packages, it was a sure winner wasn't it?

Wrong!

Straight away the signs were that this wasn't going to be easy – in one day we received three different letters from the company, each informing us of completely different price plans to the one we had agreed.

Then, despite arranging with them to set up the account well in advance of the move, we arrived at the house to discover there was no landline phone or access to the world-wide-web, and wouldn't be for a week.

You'd have thought our lives had stopped there and then.

Our family walked around as if someone had died – and not just the wireless connection to the outside world.

How was my son Matt going to Skype his mates, his brother Mike play Xbox Live, my husband Glen check his work emails and most importantly, me do my supermarket shopping online?

How we survived without it before, I'll never know.



FRUSTRATING: Why is it so difficult to get through to the communication companies?

But our problems really started when we tried to rectify the matter, the stumbling block being that we simply wanted to speak to a real live person.

After fighting our way through the unnec-

essarily complicated options on the automated menu, we were inevitably placed in a queue as the operators were 'unusually busy'.

Is it just me, or does it seem that so-called 'communication companies' are the worst at actually doing just that – talking to people?

When I eventually got to speak to someone, they explained that the confusion was that our requirements for use of the internet appeared excessive.

No more than most I'd have thought – yes we're a family of four dependent on our computers to access emails and the web in order to carry out our work and daily lives – but is that really too much for providers to handle?

Hang on a minute – didn't we have an 'unlimited broadband' package?

"Ah, yes," came the answer from the elusive operator, who went on to explain: "you can only use it up to a certain limit each month".

But it's unlimited, isn't it? After much discussion it was agreed that the definition of the word 'unlimited' would suggest just that – there is no limit to how much you use it, although this apparently doesn't apply to the world of broadband.

Frustrated is an understatement – but watch this space – we're now on the hunt for an alternative more accommodating provider.

Bring back the chalk board, shopping list and pigeon post – probably a lot easier.

Julie Maddocks is a regular columnist – email her at julie.maddocks@kosmedia.co.uk

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FOLKESTONE - CALAIS

Cranbrook plans progress to 'stage two'

COUNCILLORS have agreed to move to 'stage two' of the redevelopment project at Cranbrook's former council offices.

The decision by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's cabinet will allow more detailed plans for the future of the site to be drawn up, explored and presented.

Redevelopment plans, which are being led by the Tunbridge Wells Regeneration Company, a joint venture between the council and developers John Laing, are expected to include housing.

It comes after years of angry deadlock over

the closure of the office building.

Bob Atwood, pictured, the council's new leader, has made the building a priority. He postponed plans to demolish it on February 14, saying it was "so that discussions could be held without the sense that a decision has already been made".

"Cllr Atwood recognised there was a pressing need to deal fairly with Cranbrook when



he took over the leadership," said Major David Jukes. "It has lost a building used by the community with the closure of the council offices and so we want to look at how we can work with the town to get a new facility."

"We aren't talking specific figures yet, but we want to see this in a reasonable space of time. I mean two or three years."

Cranbrook parish chairman Peter North added: "We are delighted to be working more closely with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and the newly-appointed cabinet team."

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Contour
EXHIBITORS & EVENTS

Cruise along to our show

THIS weekend there's only one place to be – Dover Cruise Terminal for the return of Archant KOS Media's celebrated Travel and Leisure Show.

This year's event, from 10-4pm on Sunday, March 13, promises to be better than ever. Visitors can enjoy presentations from industry experts and hear from a French contingent taking part in the show for the first time.

Guests will be in with a chance of winning almost 100 prizes donated by Archant KOS Media's exhibitors, including a two-week cruise courtesy of Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines.

Other prizes include weekend breaks in the UK or France, entry to some of the county's most popular attractions and dinner at a selection of top French restaurants.

Tickets for Les Misérables, overnight stays at leading hotels and B&Bs, and falconry lessons at Quex Park in Birchington are also up for grabs.

Archant KOS Media events manager Liz Hare said: "Every year the show goes from strength to strength. We have a new area this year devoted entirely to France."

"Since its launch three years ago, this show has been very successful and with 97 prizes on offer, I hope this year will exceed all expectations."

The show will run during British Tourism Week, which aims to raise awareness of the importance of Britain's visitor economy.

Organisers behind the national event,



which runs from March 12-20, gave Archant KOS Media official accreditation for the annual Travel and Leisure Show.

Owners of the county's historic sites, gardens, attractions and other hidden gems will also be exhibiting.

Last year's show won the praise of the travel industry, with many putting in early reservations to secure stands in 2011.

Roy and Margaret Jones, from Go Cruise, said: "We were trying to think of words that would describe the show – 'fantastic, best show ever, great organisation, amazing' – but it doesn't really sum up how good we find it. The show has gone from strength to strength over the last three years."

There will be hot and cold food and drinks, and children's entertainment. Entry is free, and free parking will also be available.

More than 300 young people from 38 schools are to take part in Kent Music's annual recorder festival.

In the west of the county the event is being hosted at the Weald of Kent Grammar School in Tonbridge on Monday, March 14.

Each day ends at 7pm with a concert for friends, family and the general public.

Other events are taking place in Canterbury and Maidstone. The festival offers children from years four to six the opportunity to perform as part of a group.

Festival director Karen Barton, said: "The Recorder Festival provides an unparalleled opportunity for celebrating the children's achievements and that of their schools."

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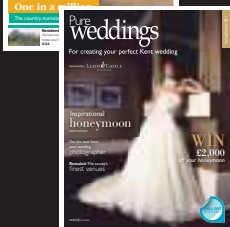


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THE travel & leisure SHOW



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10AM-4PM

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Not popularity contest

The result of the AV referendum should not depend on the personal popularity of David Cameron or Nick Clegg.

The Labour leader Ed Miliband supports the 'Yes' campaign, and was elected under it, so does Caroline Lucas, the Green leader, so does the UKIP leader Nigel Farage.

We are moving away from having two main parties to about 10.

Voters' preferences need to be recognised. The AV system does that. I will therefore vote 'Yes'.

The tendency in seats which are considered safe for one party, such as Tunbridge Wells, is to ignore the local electorate and concentrate on marginal seats elsewhere.

About 100-150 seats out of 650 decide the outcome of a General Election. Most of the rest are taken for granted.

One hundred years after the Parliament Act, MPs have failed to reform the Lords, which shows a lack of political will or a lack of political skill. Voters can decide to reform the House of Commons, and should do so on May 5.

In neighbouring Bromley, voters are allowed a second preference vote when they choose their mayor.

An Independent, an official Labour candidate and an official Conservative candidate have all needed second preference votes to be elected, and expressed brief feelings of humility and accountability.

The only previous nationwide referendum was the 1975 referendum on Europe.

An important difference is that in the AV referendum, the voters will decide and Parliament will ratify.

In 1975 Parliament had legislated. The

Make your voice heard

WE WELCOME your comments and letters for publication.

Please send correspondence to: The Editor, One Media/Archant KOS Media, Kenwood House, 1 Upper Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2EL

Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances.

Please also include a daytime

telephone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit letters.

Missed last week's paper and want to know what sparked the debate?

Access back issues online with our award-winning e-editions. Simply visit www.kentnews.co.uk and click on the paper at the top of the screen.

You can access all KOS Media's other titles this way too.



Treaty had been signed by a Conservative Prime Minister, Ted Heath.

His Labour successor, Harold Wilson, called a referendum to establish whether the voters supported his revised terms. They attended public meetings, became involved and, as broadcast by the BBC, voted Yes by a majority almost everywhere.

*Richard Underhill
Tunbridge Wells*

Voting to make a point

Your article last week on the AV referendum was very interesting. However, the facts remain that I, like I suspect very many others, will deliver our vote very much with a view of 'why should we help out the Lib Dems when

they haven't helped us?'

Nick Clegg and his party have insisted on pushing this referendum through, at the very point his party have hit an all-time low in the polls. And not without good reason. His about-turn on student tuition fees shows exactly how desperate he is to be in some sort of power, rather than having any credibility.

While I see many benefits in AV, I for one will be voting 'No' just to send a message to Nick Clegg that if he wishes to take my vote at the General Election promising a 'real alternative' and then go back on his promises, I will also change the way I cast my vote to let him down.

*Jim Carter,
Sevenoaks*

Victory for Big Society

I would like to say well done to all the people of Rusthall who have succeeded in getting the village its own parish council.

It is very much in keeping with the Big Society, that those of us who live here should have more of a say in what goes on here.

I look forward greatly to seeing how the new system works over the coming years.

*T Smith,
Rusthall*

United around plans

Am I the only person who will be rather disappointed when the cinema site and Town Hall regeneration is finally solved?

If nothing else, it has created a rare community spirit in the public's unity towards opposing or supporting, depending on your view point, the plans.

What's more, it has generated some fascinating battles in the corridors of power – most notably in terms of Mr Bullock.

All in all, once it is resolved, and most people are happy, Tunbridge Wells will be a much calmer place. Just nowhere near as exciting!

H Mercer, Tunbridge Wells

VOTE NOW...

EACH week we'll be giving you the chance to make your voice heard on a major issue.

This week we want to know your views on the upcoming AV referendum. Do you care? Will you vote Yes? Or will you vote No?

So the question is simply this: How will you vote on the AV referendum on May 5?

There is a range of options to choose from, so vote now – see the poll on the home page of www.yourtunbridgewells.co.uk, www.yourtunbridge.co.uk or www.yoursevenoaks.co.uk.

Full results will be printed next week.

LAST WEEK'S POLL

How, as a society, should we react to the coalition cuts?

- Protest – a show of anger in numbers on our streets: 22 per cent
- Protest – but only by writing letters to MPs and ministers: 4 per cent
- Show them what we think at the ballot box – and vote them out at the earliest opportunity: 15 per cent
- What can we do? No-one will take any notice: 5 per cent
- Nothing – it is a bitter pill we should swallow: 9 per cent
- I am in full support of the cuts: 42 per cent

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For advertising announcement enquiries telephone Kent on Sunday on 01303 817150

BIRTHS

CAMBURN

Paul and Philippa of Herne Bay are delighted to announce the safe arrival of their beautiful daughter, Isabelle Jean Camburn. Isabelle was born on 21st February weighing 7lb 13oz.

GUNAGANTI

Malarvizhi and Srihari Gunaganti celebrate the birth of their daughter Teja Sri on 20th February 2011.

HASKER

Lyndsey and Neil of Ramsgate are delighted to announce the birth of their son Finley Sean Robert Hasker, born on 10th February 2011 at

QEQM, Margate. Our most beautiful and precious son.

HAWKINS

Andrew and Jenny of Kings Hill are overjoyed to announce the birth of their second son, Nathaniel Adam, born on 26th February 2011. A new brother for Edward.

HIRST

Ryan Leslie, born on 24th February 2011 weighing 6lb 6.5oz. A beautiful son to Richard and Dawn Hirst of Folkestone.

HORGAN

Faith born on the 7th February 2011, weighing 7lb 14oz. Daughter to Daniel and Jolie of Folkestone.

RIGDEN

John Rigden and Maxine Horvath of Folkestone are delighted to announce the arrival of Chloe Louise at 2:14am on 24th February 2011, weighing in at just 7lb 5oz. A beautiful baby sister for Skye.

DEATHS

BARROWCLIFFE

Peter Barrowcliffe, formerly of Ramsgate, passed away on 26th February 2011, aged 63. Thank you to those who cared for him.

FALCONER

Vera Falconer passed away peacefully at EllenorLions Hospice,

Northfleet, on Tuesday 1st March aged 69 years. A much loved wife, mum, sister, grandma and friend who will be very sadly missed by all. Funeral service to take place at Eltham Crematorium on 18th March at 3.30pm. Family flowers only and donations if desired to EllenorLions Hospice.

HAYES

Joan Betty Hayes of Deal passed away peacefully on 22nd February 2011. A much loved mum, grandmother and great grandmother who will be sadly missed. The funeral was held on 8th February at Barham Crematorium.

problems, they start looking to make a name for themselves abroad.

So the Archbishop of Canterbury ignores his decaying Church and tries to interfere in matters that are not really his concern.

Thanks to the continual dilution of Christ's message, the adoption of pagan teachings and the desire to do man's will rather than God's, Dr Rowan Williams has not only assisted the drift towards a more secular and soon to be Godless society, but presides over a Church which is crumbling beneath him, as his bishops leave for what they think are greener pastures.

He should be attending to the spiritual dearth in his Church as his flocks become, "skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd" [Matthew 9:36].

He should be more concerned at his lack of defence of the Christian faith, which is under attack as it has never been before, as more and more Christians are persecuted for their beliefs.

Instead, he does anything other than reinforce Christ's teachings, anything other than teach Biblical truths, anything other than give a spiritual lead in a very spiritually dark world. He is neither one thing or another, and as God said in Revelation 3:15-16, "Because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of my mouth".

His Church cannot stand.

Phil Granger, West Malling

People know best on EU, Cameron

Just how long can David Cameron ignore the people on the subject of the EU, after telling everyone to listen to the people?

It's quite possible the people of this country are a lot wiser than this government and can see all the disadvantages of belonging to this club, and very few of the benefits.

This country does not belong to Cameron or this government. It belongs to the people they are supposed to represent.

Going to the voting booth to put them in Westminster must be some sort of a joke, as David Cameron is no more than a caretaker passing on the EU rules and regulations.

Since Ted Heath, less and less of this country is being governed by Parliament and more and more by the unelected crowd in Brussels.

Just in case Mr Cameron has not got the message: "We want our country back." It is not down to him alone to decide on such an important issue.

Quite often we see war graves on television and I have to wonder why all those people died for our freedom when someone comes along and sells us down the river. That is an insult to all of those people, and not letting us have a say in staying or leaving the EU is an insult to the whole country.

He promised, amongst the many promises he has broken, some sort of a referendum about Europe, but the only promise he has kept so far is the one he made to Nick Clegg and that is one the country does not want.

RE Tucker, Sheerness

Flooding caused by overpopulation

Here we go again. Steve Dawe of Kent Green Party belongs to the school that believes if you repeat anything enough times, it must make it true.

The latest is that recent flooding provides conclusive irrefutable proof of man-made global warming. Never mind that flooding occurred before the Industrial Revolution, before the world was so overpopulated and even covered the whole earth during the time of Noah, thousands of years ago.

The main contribution we have made to flooding is the concreting and asphaltting over of vast areas of land that once used to

soak up the rain. Now it stays on the surface, accumulates and floods housing. So once again in this argument we are back to the real problem of overpopulation.

Phil Granger, West Malling

Animal lovers can play a vital role

We're calling on readers to lend a hand at the RSPCA. The Kent West, Ashford and Dover, branches are searching for the volunteer stars of the future to help out with tasks, which go much further than dog walking and cat cuddling.

We are looking for people who can help out with all aspects of the charity's operation at a local level ranging from fundraising, assisting in the shops and customer service and having a say in key decisions as a branch trustee.

We hope that these opportunities will benefit the volunteers as well. Many of the tasks we need help with could help people struggling to find work to gain employment, or give school leavers and recent graduates that all-important work experience.

The RSPCA is a charity and receives no Government funding. It relies on members of the public to continue encouraging kindness and preventing cruelty to animals.

Experience is not necessary for many of the tasks, so whatever your forte, there should be something for you.

If your readers are interested in getting involved, they can contact the RSPCA enquiries team on 0300 1234 555, log on to www.rspca.org.uk or contact their local branch.

Liz Sheppee, branch operations manager, RSPCA

Check the rules on campaigning

On Thursday, May 5, voters will decide who represents them in local elections across England. There will also be a referendum on whether we use the 'first past the post' or 'alternative vote' system to elect MPs to the UK Parliament. Many of your readers will want to get involved in campaigning in the referendum and elections.

This could be by setting up a campaign group, standing as a candidate or starting a political party.

Anyone who wants to get involved should be aware that there are rules. These are set out at www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance and I'd encourage everyone hoping to play an active role in the campaigns to check the rules.

Peter Wardle, chief executive, Electoral Commission

Charity runners' Olympic chance

World Cancer Research Fund is inviting charity runners to run the 2012 Olympic Marathon route in a 10K race.

While raising money for vital cancer prevention research and education work, entrants will be able to take in the sights of next year's Olympic event including Parliament, Westminster Abbey, St Paul's, Trafalgar Square and Buckingham Palace.

There is no entry fee to race for WCRF on May 30, all you have to do is raise £200 in sponsorship.

Runners will get the full support of a dedicated member of WCRF's Events Team; training and nutrition advice; essential kit, including your unique vest; a fundraising pack and your own online sponsorship page.

Call 020 7343 4200 or visit www.wcrf-uk.org/signup to join.

Sian Fraser, events fundraiser, WCRF

Reforms overlook autism needs

As a supporter of the National Autistic Society living in the area, I am extremely concerned about the Government's Disability Living Allowance (DLA) reforms.

The reforms mean people with autism will have to undergo a stringent face-to-face assessment to claim this vital benefit. Autism is a 'hidden' disability and unless assessors have specific training in the condition, it is very likely the needs of people with autism will be misunderstood or overlooked.

I would like to appeal to our local MP to bring this issue to parliament in line with the National Autistic Society's Who Benefits? campaign, which puts forward the following four points aimed at protecting society's most vulnerable:

- People shouldn't have to go through a face-to-face assessment if they already have sufficient evidence about their autism from previous assessments
- People with autism experience a variety of difficulties with daily life. The Government must make sure that these are reflected in the new assessment.
- Assessors must be trained so that they understand autism and how to talk to someone with autism, and can make a fair assessment of that person's needs
- The Government must not abolish the mobility component of DLA for people living in residential care.

I urge others in the area to take action now, by visiting www.autism.org.uk/whobenefits.

Isabelle Owen, Headcorn

Throwing good money after bad

I am appalled to read of Kent County Council's bid for £10m to the Regional Growth Fund, to support the construction of a rail station at Thanet Parkway, with the support of Roger Gale, one of our MPs.

This would subsidise a commercial airline operator to encourage it to fly from Manston airport to Europe.

A number of things trouble me about this: Far from being transparent, KCC is unwilling to release any details about this bid for public money to support a private company (and a company, moreover, that pays its taxes in New Zealand). Surely this is against the Conservative's public policy of more transparency in government?

A few years ago KCC headed a group of

investors (almost all public sector) in a misguided attempt to boost business at Manston by subsidising flights to Virginia. In months, £200,000 was lost – almost all of it public money. KCC also invested in the previous owner of Manston, Planestation, and lost that public money too, when the company went into liquidation.

The Audit Commission criticised KCC for its ill-considered attempt to boost Manston by using public funds.

This current bid would be a classic case of throwing more public money away.

Market economics suggest that, if a commercial airline operator has to be subsidised to be tempted to fly from Manston, the route is not commercially viable without a subsidy. Airline operators are not daft – they fight for the routes that will make money and shun the rest. Manston has been in commercial ownership for 11 years and still has just two passenger flights a day.

A rail station at Thanet Parkway will make only a very marginal difference to the airport's accessibility and will not be enough to turn this loss-making business into a thriving regional airport.

Local people fear the grand plan is to build Thanet Parkway rail station in the middle of nowhere and then close Ramsgate rail station (and possibly two others) so that people who want to travel by train to London have to drive to a station rather than walk, as they do now. This is a retrograde step when we are supposed to be cutting emissions.

An unsuccessful Thanet Parkway station would lend itself to becoming another out-of-town shopping centre. In an era when we're worried about the UK's food security, this would be a poor swap for prime Kent farmland.

KCC has already said in its Local Transport Plan that it is not viable in the current economic climate to speed up the rail line from Thanet to London. If this is the case, then investing millions exploring Thanet Parkway is a complete waste of money, as KCC cannot afford to see the project through in the next five years.

What I would like to know – will KCC's past investment failures be taken into account when this £10m is considered?

Carole Russell, Ramsgate

Archbishop needs to defend his faith

Famously, when politicians lose their grip on their own countries and have no answers to its



A second bite at success

BURGER chain McDonald's is celebrating the success of 45 employees who recently completed the company's apprenticeship scheme.

Awarded a 'good' rating by the education watchdog Ofsted, the programme provides job-specific skills in customer service, teamwork and communications, and is equivalent to five GCSEs.

The apprenticeship scheme sits in the middle of the fast-food giant's learning ladder, which ranges from work experience for schoolchildren to a foundation degree in managing business operations.

Sherri Frier, 21, from Canterbury, was among the first to complete the qualification.

She said: "McDonald's has made learning accessible, not only by providing a course that varies between academic and practical studying but also by allowing you to earn while you learn."

"The apprenticeship is the second chance at education I never thought I would have. In five years' time I would like to be in a management position with the company as I love my job at McDonald's."

"The scheme has been a huge step towards achieving my goals and giving me the confidence to believe I can progress as far as I want to with hard work and commitment."

Almost 3,000 McDonald's staff from across the UK have already completed an apprenticeship with the company, while more than 7,000 are currently working towards achieving the qualification.

Nationally recognised and accredited by City and Guilds, it provides employees with transferable skills they can use in their future career.

Franchisee Paul Crocker, who runs a number of McDonald's restaurants in Kent, said: "The education landscape in the UK is evolving in the midst of the changing economic climate."

"As a result, vocational qualifications are more relevant than ever since they provide people with the opportunity to continue gaining qualifications at the same time as working in a relevant employment sector."

Constructive career path opens for Kelli

By **STEVE KNIGHT**

steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

FEMALE workers are being urged not to miss out on an expected explosion in the number of available construction jobs in the South East.

Despite the current high jobless figures in the region, construction employment is forecast to reach 395,740 in 2015, with an average rate of 5,440 new workers needed every

year. According to CITB-ConstructionSkills, this shows that there is a wealth of opportunities available to women in Kent.

The charity is now encouraging the fairer sex to follow in the footsteps of people like Kelli Randall, from Gillingham, who is an apprentice engineer technician at Skanska UK.

The 19-year-old is working towards a diploma in civil engineering and an NVQ in site technical support.

"I first got interested in civil engineering in sixth form at school and haven't looked back since," she said.



RISING PROSPECTS: Kelli Randall is urging other women to follow her into construction

"My job is varied and hugely fulfilling, and I would urge other women to consider a career in construction if they haven't already. No two days are the same and there are new challenges every day, which is why I enjoy my job so much."

"Although the industry is male-dominated, everyone is so nice I tend not to notice I am working with men most of the time."

"Having said that, my current project manager is a woman and is a real source of inspiration as I look to the future and developing my career."

The appeal for more women workers forms part of CITB-ConstructionSkills' Positive Image campaign, which aims to ensure there is a fresh supply of talent to the industry to help avert a retirement timebomb.

It was launched to coincide with International Women's Day on Tuesday.

Gillian Cain, regional delivery manager for the South East, said enthusiastic recruits to the construction industry will ensure companies have the skills they need to survive.

She added: "Kelli is just one of the many women who are helping to make construction and the built environment a diverse and successful industry."

"Although women and ethnic minorities are increasingly drawn to construction, they are still under-represented so we are urging them to get in touch to find out about the huge range of careers and routes into the industry available to them."

"Today's employers are looking to recruit from a much wider pool of talent, so now really is the time for more women to get involved and reap the benefits."

Visit www.cskills.org or call 0300 456 5824 for more information.

WHAT is your business doing to help Keep Kent Working?

Are you running an apprenticeship scheme to attract young workers? Are your employees being sent on training courses to aid their personal development? Or are you funding a university scholarship to help find the businessmen and women of the future?

Send your good news stories to steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk or call 01303 817136.

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Inspiring project is setting the stage for musical youth

A YOUTH training project aimed at inspiring young people through music is staging monthly gigs in Maidstone.

Training Them Live (TTL) is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to providing its clients with the life skills required to aid their transition into further education and employment.

Last month it staged its first gig at the Babylon Live Lounge in King Street, Maidstone, with future shows planned for the first Sunday of every month.

TTL chairman Chris Ellen said: "Our project has been running for the last six years and is strongly supported by Medway Council, Kent Police, and local businesses and business partnerships.

"Training Them Live provides a youth engagement strategy through its music projects, which helps give bored youngsters places to go and keeps them out of harm's way. We are also able to provide them with valuable life-skill building blocks which help to support them in fur-

ther education and employment."

Among the skills taught to youths involved in the project include how to work both on stage and in the studio, and how to improve with their instruments of choice. Money raised from the gigs is donated to the Sittingbourne-based charity Demelza Hospice Care for Children.

Babylon Live Lounge owner Kirit Velani said: "We contacted Training Them Live having heard about their rock schools and the work they do in providing acts and event management for the Under Siege concerts at Rochester Castle.

"We've opened our doors to give musicians a chance to play in a real music venue, using and learning from all of our lighting and sound equipment."

The Sunday Night Live gigs are held over two floors, each with their own type of music, between 3-10pm on the first Sunday of every month.

Admission is £3 on the door. For more information, visit www.ttlgigs.co.uk.



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Shelley's four-day forum



AMBITIOUS: Centre manager Shelley Filippi

A SHOPPING centre manager has won a place on a prestigious four-day retail training course, worth £2,000.

Shelley Filippi, who works for the Cushman & Wakefield real estate firm in Swanley, will join other senior figures at the Oxford Retail Masters Forum, running from March 28-31.

As well as hosting seminars with guest speakers, the course invites attendees to explore such issues as global sourcing, ethical trading, business management and climate change.

Shelley said: "As a shopping centre manager, I hope the forum will give me a better understanding of retailers' needs at a higher level.

"I want to expand and advance my career in retail but I know I need to get up to speed with the industry language and trends, and attending the course will help me achieve this."

The scholarship was joint-funded by Skillsmart Retail, the Sector Skills Council for Retail, and the Retail Trust.

Learning support sessions

KENT Adult Education is running courses for people hoping to enter the field of learning support.

Level one introduction sessions are being offered across the county from next month, with potential students advised to visit www.kent.gov.uk/adulted or call 0845 606 5606 for more information on how to enrol.

The organisation is highlighting the story

of one of its former learners, Satvinder from Gravesend, who gained recognised literacy and numeracy qualifications with Kent Adult Education so she could land a part-time job at a local school.

Her employers were so impressed with her skills and dedication they promoted her to a teaching assistant role and are currently supporting her full teacher training.

Professional Development Courses

Half Day Awareness Courses
Only £24 each

DYSPRAXIA AWARENESS

5 April 2011 or 7 June 2011, 9.00 - 12.30pm

INTRODUCTION TO ADD/ADHD

24 April 2011 or 26 May 2011, 9.00 - 12.30pm

CYBER BULLYING

9 March 2011 or 15 June 2011, 9.00 - 12.30pm

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

9 March 2011 or 15 June 2011, 9.00 - 12.30pm

ANXIETY AND MOOD DISORDERS

29 March 2011 or 21 June 2011, 9.00 - 12.30pm

INTRODUCTION TO ASD

12 March 2011 or 17 June 2011, 9.00 - 12.30pm

Full Day Awareness Courses
Only £48 each

INTRODUCTION TO DYSLEXIA AND EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR WORKING WITH DYSLEXIC STUDENTS

22 March 2011 or 17 May 2011, 9.30 - 3.30pm

All courses are delivered at the Training Solutions Business Centre at Manston Park.

For more information, please contact the **Training Solutions Team** on **01843 605032** or email training.solutions@thanet.ac.uk





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Property Sales Executive Field Based Medway, Maidstone & Swale

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ARCHANT KOS Media is seeking a highly motivated person to create and sell multi-media solutions in our market leading portfolio of newspapers, magazines and digital sales and to develop sale within an exciting new property portal.

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We provide innovative ideas that will in return give our clients real value and response. Looking after and growing an existing customer base along with finding new business will form the basis of the job role.

You will need to be a self-motivated individual with sales experience, good communicator and presenter, tenacious and hard working to succeed in this environment.

Media experience is not essential as full training will be given.

We offer an excellent basic salary plus generous bonus scheme, ongoing training and career development, five weeks' annual leave, contributory pension and life assurance scheme (after qualifying period) and all the benefits of working for a large media organisation.

Please apply in writing with your CV and covering letter in the first instance to:

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ARCHANT KOS MEDIA
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Self motivated, flexible sales people required to sell marketing services for local businesses.

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Apply: info@yourlocalbusinessmarketing.com or telephone: 01227 733444

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We are a Health & Nutrition company looking for serious people who want to earn £500-£1000+ per month full/part-time working from home.

Full training and support available.
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TYRE FITTER / WAREHOUSE ASSISTANT

Job Description Summary:

- Fitting tyres to alloy wheels • Balancing wheel/tyre units
- Wrapping finished wheel/tyre units
- Handling incoming goods • Preparing outgoing goods
- Maintaining equipment

Must be experienced in tyre fitting, essential.

Hours: 37.5 hours per week (9:00 – 5:30 Mon-Fri)

Holiday Entitlement: 28 days

Salary: £8.50 – £9.50 per hour – negotiable dependant on experience.

Location:

Unit 17, Connect 10, Foster Road, Ashford, Kent, TN24 0SH

For more information please contact

Toby Woods/Gary Matthews

Tel: 01233 503006 or email: sales@rimstyle.com



London Care
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- Evening working hours
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London Care PLC is a leading provider of care support services to vulnerable older people and people with disabilities living in their own homes.

Contact Jill or Jak, Monday to Friday,
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PART-TIME COOK

required for residential home in the Meopham and Wrotham area. Alternate weekends and plus holiday cover. To cook for 50 plus elderly residents. Good home cooking skills required.

Please call Karen or Julie - Tel: **01732 822215** or email: holywellpark@aol.com

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To work in a 40 bedded nursing home.
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Please ring for information
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Carer Support Workers (Bank Staff)

We are currently seeking dedicated Carer Support Workers (bank) to join our team to work with clients of all ages providing Carers with that all important Carers Break. We work on a flexible roster and you will be required to work some evenings and some weekends.

Applicants should hold NVQ2/3 in social care. We offer a bespoke quality service for carers of people of all ages at a time when they need it most.

To apply or to find out more: please phone 01634 868885 between 9am and 4pm for your application form or email: medwaycrossroads@btconnect.com



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**FULL-TIME SHIFTS AVAILABLE IN TONBRIDGE,
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- Self Employed basis only
- Shift starts at 7am
- £8.25 to £13.00 per hour
- You need to be happy taking responsibility and working with older people on your own
- Must have own car and phone
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Experience preferred but not essential.

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The future of local media

Be a part of an exciting and growing team developing our portfolio across Kent

B2B Media Sales Executives – Field Based x 2 Full Time permanent - Tunbridge Wells Full Time permanent – East Kent

We are looking for a highly motivated and experienced sales professional to drive new business and manage existing clients.

The ideal candidate should be comfortable with all stages of client relationship management and should be proficient at sourcing leads, securing new revenue, delivering presentations, writing proposals, negotiating and closing.

The person we are seeking will be an energetic and enthusiastic individual with excellent sales skills, a self starter; tenacious and will have excellent verbal and written communication ability. You will need to demonstrate a proven sales track record, preferably from within media (although this is not essential,) will have a good understanding of the benefits of printed, online and live media. Knowledge of the Kent marketplace would be beneficial.

Telephone Sales Executive Ashford

You will play a key role in selling advertising across our market leading portfolio of newspapers, websites and mobile products. Candidates should possess a track record in telephone sales, combining excellent communication skills, tenacity and the ability to build relationships. Ideally you will have a media sales background, although this is not essential as full training and support is provided.

Recruitment Executive Ashford

You will ideally have a recruitment agency background, possess a track record in telephone sales and negotiation, be well organised and combine excellent communication skills, tenacity and the ability to build relationships. Ultimately, we need an articulate and assured recruitment professional.

We offer an excellent basic salary plus generous bonus scheme, ongoing training and career development, five weeks' annual leave, contributory pension and life assurance scheme (after qualifying period) and all the benefits of working for a large media organisation. All candidates must have own transport.

Please apply with your CV and covering letter in the first instance to:

Christine Davidson, Commercial Director
ARCHANT KOS MEDIA,
Apple Barn, Hythe Road,
Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SS
Or by email christine.davidson@kosmedia.co.uk

Media Sales Executives - Field Based x 2 Full Time permanent - Tunbridge Wells Full Time permanent – Maidstone & Surrounding

KOS Media look for highly motivated people to create and sell multi-media solutions in our market leading portfolio including newspapers, magazines and digital sales.

We believe and pride ourselves in good customer service, professional marketing solutions and excellent business relationships. We provide innovative ideas that will in return give our clients real value and response.

Looking after and growing an existing customer base along with finding new business will form the basis of the job role. You will need to be a self motivated individual with sales experience, good communicator, tenacious and hard working to succeed in this environment.

Please apply in writing with your CV and covering letter in the first instance to:

Ynez Coton, Commercial Director,
ARCHANT KOS MEDIA
Apple Barn, Hythe Rd, Smeeth, Ashford Kent. TN25 6SS
Or email ynnez.coton@kosmedia.co.uk

Senior reporter

Archant KOS Media is looking for an experienced, enthusiastic, self-starter in a rare opportunity to join our senior reporting team. Providing balanced, insightful, engaging copy week in, week out for our award-winning weekend titles Kent on Sunday and Kent on Saturday. As well as our midweek e-editions and websites, the role is demanding but richly rewarding.

You will have worked as a senior reporter within the local or national press or have recently passed your NCE exams and will be prepared to take an integral, responsible, role within a friendly newsroom. You will be capable of bringing in off-diary exclusives and be full of ideas.

Salary is competitive.

Junior reporter

Archant KOS Media is seeking a junior reporter, in a rare opportunity to join its editorial team. Ideally you will have taken your NCE preliminary exams, but training will be provided.

You must be highly motivated, have a determination to learn quickly and succeed, and be prepared to play a key role in a friendly newsroom. You must not be shy of responsibility and have gained some experience within the local newspaper industry.

Serving our weekend titles, Kent on Sunday and Kent on Saturday, you will also work for our midweek e-editions and our websites. The role will require hard work, bags of energy, enthusiasm, and a real love of local newspapers and serving our loyal readers.

Send a CV and covering letter to:

Chris Britcher, Editor (News)
ARCHANT KOS MEDIA,
Apple Barn, Hythe Road,
Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SS
Or email: chris.britcher@kosmedia.co.uk

ARCHANT } KOS MEDIA



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Agriculture, Forestry, Environment

TOWNSCAPE IMPROVEMENT OFFICER

Folkstone
Salary: £25,620 - £30,201 plus
To apply/more information:
Shepway District Council
jobs@shepway.gov.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

Customer Service, Call Centre

Data Entry Clerks

Canterbury, Maidstone, Dover
Salary £250 Per Week
To apply/more information:
Dataworks Ltd
dataworks@job4u.com
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Education, Teacher, School

Graduate Teacher Training Programme

Sittingbourne
Salary Negotiable
Interested in a career in teaching and joining our Graduate Teacher Training Programme? Westlands Academies Trust has vacancies for graduates who wish to undertake school-based teacher training, whilst receiving financial support. Professional help is given to successful applicants to enable them to begin teaching classes at the earliest appropriate opportunity. Applications are invited from graduates who are interested in teaching Science or Design Technology at Secondary level, and in the Primary sector, all subjects in the curriculum. Westlands Academies Trust has an excellent reputation for high quality training within a friendly and supportive environment. This is an excellent opportunity to acquire practical teaching experience under the guidance of highly skilled and dedicated professionals. Application forms are available from the school or online. These should be returned with a CV and letter of application. CVs are not accepted without an application form. Closing date: Wednesday 9 March 2011
Westlands Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced CRB check. Tel: 01795 477475 Fax: 01795 479461
Email: swa@westlands.kent.sch.uk
Executive Headteacher: Mr J Whitcombe MA
Westlands Academies Trust Company No 7344732
To apply/more information:
Westlands School (The)
headteacher@westlands.kent.sch.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

TEACHER OF FRENCH

Tonbridge
Salary Negotiable
TEACHER OF FRENCH/FULL TIME
Required for September 2011
We are seeking to appoint an enthusiastic Teacher of French. The successful candidate will be delivering GCSE French as part of our English Baccalaureate. Hugh Christie Technology College is a good school with outstanding features. Located in a total new build, the school has a national and international reputation for the use of technology and curriculum innovation. For further information contact Jenny

Rutherfordjrutherford@hughchristie.kent.sch.uk
Closing date for applications: 18th March 2011
Interviews to be held: week commencing 28th March 2011
We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. As part of this process, all successful candidates will be required to apply for an enhanced CRB disclosure.
To apply/more information:
Hugh Christie Technology College
jrutherford@hughchristie.kent.sch.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

Teacher of Science

The Folkestone School for Girls
Salary Mainscale
To apply/more information:
Folkestone School For Girls
sdunster@folkestonegirls.kent.sch.uk
Quoting Job Ref: KoS

Engineering, Manufacturing, Utilities

Fencing Installers

South East Area
Salary Negotiable
To apply/more information:
Pembury Group
applications@kosmedia.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

TROWEL TRADES TECHNICIAN

Broadstairs
Salary £7,990-£8,896
TROWEL TRADES TECHNICIAN
Salary scale: £7,990-£8,896 for 18.5 hours per week all year
The college is looking to recruit a Trowel Trades Technician to provide support and assistance to staff and students in the workshops as appropriate.
Job reference: TTT001
Closing date: Wednesday 18th March 2011
For further details and to apply online please visit our website www.thanet.ac.uk and click on Vacancies. Alternatively contact the HR Office, Thanet College, Ramsgate Road, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 1PN or telephone our application pack on (01843) 605052.
To apply/more information:
Thanet College
personnel@thanet.ac.uk
Quoting Job Ref: TTT001

Health & Safety, Security, Defence

Health, Safety & Environmental Technician

North Kent
Salary c£24,500 plus benefits
To apply/more information:
Interpersonnel
jfk@interpersonnel.ltd.uk
Quoting Job Ref: 1723

Leisure, Tourism, Travel

Wellness Coaches

Work from Home
Salary £1000.00+ per mnth
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Personal Wellness Coaches required P/T hours to suit-work from home Full Training and Support available £1,000.00+ per mnth
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Arriba
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Management, Senior Positions

Business Development Manager

Maidstone
Salary Negotiable
Business Development Manager
Currently seeking dynamic and organised sales professionals to develop and secure new business whilst generating sales opportunities in line with Company strategy. Industry experience / knowledge of the uPVC window and building materials sector is highly advantageous. Competitive salary, Company car, laptop and mobile phone will be provided. Please forward your CV and covering letter to recruitment@eurocell.co.uk
FAO Karen Freeman
To apply/more information:
Eurocell
recruitment@eurocell.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

Public Sector, Social Services

Domiciliary Care Workers

Canterbury & Thanet
Salary £7.00 per hour
To apply/more information:
Bluebird Care
canterbury@bluebirdcare.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

TROWEL TRADES TECHNICIAN

Broadstairs
Salary £7,990-£8,896
TROWEL TRADES TECHNICIAN
Salary scale: £7,990-£8,896
To apply/more information:
Thanet College
personnel@thanet.ac.uk
Quoting Job Ref: TTT001

TEACHER OF FRENCH

Tonbridge
Salary Negotiable
TEACHER OF FRENCH/FULL TIME
Required for September 2011
We are seeking to appoint an enthusiastic Teacher of French. The successful candidate will be delivering GCSE French as part of our English Baccalaureate. Hugh Christie Technology College is a good school with outstanding features. Located in a total new build, the school has a national and international reputation for the use of technology and curriculum innovation. For further information contact Jenny
Rutherfordjrutherford@hughchristie.kent.sch.uk
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Interviews to be held: week commencing 28th March 2011
We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. As part of this process, all successful candidates will be required to apply for an enhanced CRB disclosure.
To apply/more information:
Hugh Christie Technology College
jrutherford@hughchristie.kent.sch.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

SUPPORT WORKERS

Sittingbourne
Salary Negotiable
To apply/more information:
Country Care
ellenscourt@btconnect.com
Quoting Job Ref: kos

Day Carers

Broadstairs
Salary Negotiable
Port Regis Residential Care
Home for the elderly in Broadstairs Require Day Carers
Full time or Part time Tel: 01843 602266
To apply/more information:
Port Regis Residential Home

applications@jobsforkent.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

Retail, Wholesale, Sales

Collectors & Canvassers

East Kent
Salary Self Employed position
Would you like to earn some extra cash and help raise money for Pilgrims Hospices? Flexible hours to suit you. We are looking for individuals to collect membership subscriptions from already established rounds in parts of East Kent. Canvassers also required in some areas to gain new Lottery members. Self-employed position. Standard CRB disclosure may be required for successful applicants. Please call Shiralee on 01227 379741 for further details
To apply/more information:
Pilgrims Hospice
applications@jobsforkent.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

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Kent
Salary
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Run your own business without the usual risks... and help people save money!
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earn a second income
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www.minibills.co.uk
To apply/more information:
Utility Warehouse
alanbarnett@telecomplus.org.uk
Quoting Job Ref: KOS

Scientific & Pharmaceutical , Research

Chemist

3 - 6 month time shift chemist
North Kent
Salary c£14/hour plus retention bonus
Providing 12 hour, 7 day analytical service working 42 hour week 6am-6pm or 7am-7pm on flexible rota - Lone working weekends. Purpose of role is to ensure all assays/analysis are carried out to timelines according to H & S legislation. Preparation, analysis and calibration of samples, solutions and equipment. Applicants require a deg in Analytical Chemistry/Chemistry with 2 - 3 years experience in OES, AA, ICP and Wet Chemical Analysis plus production / process experience.
To apply/more information:
Interpersonnel
jfk@interpersonnel.ltd.uk
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Mid Kent
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LGV C+E (HGV1) Drivers
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Work available includes Supermarkets / Store Deliveries, General Haulage, Night Trunking plus more. Varying shifts :- Weekdays , Weekends, Earlies, Lates, Nights.
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maidstone
@thebestconnection.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: KOS/AH/02



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Email: appointments@kosmedia.co.uk

Online: www.jobsforkent.co.uk



TEACHER OF HAIRDRESSING (Maternity Cover)

Required for an immediate start
Salary – Unqualified Teachers Scale

Are you:

- An enthusiastic and imaginative practitioner, who is passionate about teaching and learning?
- Someone who has high aspirations for students, and can contribute new and innovative ideas to curriculum development?
- Looking to join a strong, supportive and forward thinking vocational team?
 - Eager to work in a new salon and school environment?

This is an excellent opportunity to develop your teaching skills and to be part of many new initiatives started by our outstanding vocational team. Flexible working hours will be required.

Thamesview is an 11-16 non-selective Foundation High School. It is located in a pleasant area of Gravesend surrounded by open space and farmland with views of the River Thames to the north east, close to London and with easy access to airports, Ebbsfleet International Station and the Channel Tunnel.

We were fortunate to be in the last wave of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme, which was the biggest single government investment in improving school buildings for over 50 years. Our new-build school, which opened fully in September 2010 is state-of-the art, and designed to motivate and engage our learners. Candidates are very welcome to visit the school. Please call to make arrangements.

If you think this role sounds exciting, Please contact: 01474 566552 ext 8081120 or email k.allen@thamesview.kent.sch.uk for further information.

Closing Date: 14th March 2011

Interviews: Week commencing 21st March 2011

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students.

Appointment to this post will require an Enhanced Disclosure via the Criminal Records Bureau.

Thamesview School operates a non-smoking policy.



ARE YOU A UK GRADUATE IN ENGLISH, MATHS, SCIENCE OR FRENCH? ARE YOU INTERESTED IN A CAREER IN TEACHING?

We are delighted to be offering four GTP placements, one in each of the subject areas listed above, under the GRADUATE TEACHER PROGRAMME at Thamesview School for a September 2011 start. The placement is run in conjunction with Canterbury Christ Church University and leads to full Qualified Teacher Status on successful completion of the training programme.

Thamesview is an 11-16 non-selective Foundation High School. It is located in a pleasant area of Gravesend surrounded by open space and farmland with views of the River Thames to the north east, close to London and with easy access to airports, Ebbsfleet International Station and the Channel Tunnel.

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If you think these roles sound exciting, Please contact: 01474 566552 ext 8081120 or email k.allen@thamesview.kent.sch.uk for further information.

CVs without an application form will not be accepted.

Closing Date: Monday 14th March 2011.

Interviews: Week Commencing Monday 21st March 2011.

Successful candidates will be invited for interview at the school and our recommendations will then be passed to Canterbury Christ Church University. The University will then select candidates for further interview.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students.

Appointment to this post will require an Enhanced Disclosure via the Criminal Records Bureau.

Thamesview School operates a non-smoking policy.

Teachers Needed Primary, Secondary and SEN.

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HIGHWAYS

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Ashford

HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 – SECTION 116
STOPPING UP OF LAND AT SIMONE WEIL AVENUE, ASHFORD

I am giving notice that the KENT COUNTY COUNCIL propose to make an application to the Magistrates sitting at Sittingbourne Magistrates Court on Monday 18 April 2011 at 10:00am for an Order under Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 to extinguish highways rights on the grounds that they are unnecessary on land at Simone Weil Avenue, Ashford, as shown in red on the plan on deposit.

A copy of this notice and the plan referred to are on deposit, and can be seen during normal office hours, at the main reception at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent. ME14 1XQ.

If you require further information or would like to discuss this matter, please contact John Farmer of Kent Highway Services in writing at the address given below, or by telephone on 08458 247800 (24 hour contact centre) or by e-mail to john.farmer@kent.gov.uk

HIGHWAYS - District of Dover

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(ALKHAM VALLEY ROAD, DRELLINGORE, DOVER)
(50 MPH SPEED LIMIT) ORDER 2011

NOTICE is hereby given that the KENT COUNTY COUNCIL proposes to make the above named Order under section 84(1), (2) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, (hereinafter called “the Act”) and of all other enabling powers, and after consultation with the chief officer of police in accordance with paragraph 20 of Part III of Schedule 9 to the Act,

The effect of the Order will extend the existing 50 mph speed limit. The length of road described below encompasses the existing length of 50 mph speed limit and the proposed new length of 50 mph speed limit.

Name of Road	Length of Road
Alkham Valley Road	From the junction with Lockering Lane to a point 125 metres north east of the junction with Hockley Sole Lane

Orders amended by the proposals and a statement of reasons for proposing to make the Order may be examined on Mondays to Fridays at Dover District Council, White Cliffs Business Park, Dover and Sessions House, Maidstone during normal opening times

If you wish to offer support for or object to the proposed Order you should send the grounds in writing to the Transport and Development Team Leader, Kent Highway Services, Javelin Way, Ashford, TN24 8AD or by email to td.eastkent@kent.gov.uk by noon on Monday 4 April 2011.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Gravesham

HENLEY STREET, LUDESSESDOWNE - (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order restricting the use by vehicular traffic on Henley Street, Luddesdowne for the entire length.

The Order will become effective on 28th March 2011, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last 3 days. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: Sole Street, The Street Cobham, Cobhambury Road, Luddesdown Road

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate soak away cleansing.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(VARIOUS ROADS, GRAVESHAM) (WAITING RESTRICTIONS AND STREET PARKING PLACES) (CONSOLIDATION) (AMENDMENT NO 7) ORDER 2010

NOTICE is hereby given that KENT COUNTY COUNCIL has made the above named Order under sections 1(3), 2(1) to (3), 3(2), 4(1) and (2), 32(1), 35(1), and 124 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and of all other enabling powers, and after consultation with the chief officer of police in accordance with Paragraph 20 of Schedule 9 to the Act:

The effect of the Order will be to introduce parking bays on the southern side of Cross Lane East, Gravesend on the length fronting Nos 1 Echo Square westwards to include Echo Court.

The Order was sealed on 9 March 2011 and will come into force 14 March 2011.

Full details are contained in the Order which, together with the relevant plans, any Orders amended and a statement of the Council's reasons for making the Order may be examined on Mondays to Fridays Gravesham

Borough Council Offices, Civic Centre, Gravesham and at Sessions House, Maidstone during normal opening times.

Any person wishing to question the validity of the Order or any of the provisions contained therein on the grounds that it is not within the powers of the relevant enabling Act or that any requirement of any such enabling Act or of any regulations made there under have not been complied with may within 6 weeks from the date on which the Order was made make application to the High Court for this purpose.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Maidstone

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(VARIOUS ROADS, FANT, MAIDSTONE)
(WIDTH LIMIT) ORDER 2011

NOTICE is hereby given that KENT COUNTY COUNCIL proposes to make the above named Order under Sections 1(1) and (2), 2(1) to 3, 3(2) and 4) and part IV of Schedule 9 section 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and of all other enabling powers, and after consultation with the chief officer of police in accordance with Paragraph 20 of Schedule 9 to the Act:

The Order will prohibit any vehicle the width of which, inclusive of any load on the vehicle, exceeds 6 feet 6 inches, except for access, to proceed on the following length of road, subject to exemptions for emergency services, maintenance, etc. and statutory undertakers carrying out work on the affected length of the road. Any vehicle authorised by the Highway Authority will also be exempt from the proposed Order.

Lengths of road

Bower Lane	Entire length
Hever Gardens	Entire length
Bower Place	Entire length
Orchard Place	Entire length
Evelyn Road	Entire length
Newton Close	Entire length

Full details are contained in the draft Order which, together with the relevant plans, any Orders amended by the proposals and a statement of reasons for proposing to make the Order may be examined on Mondays to Fridays at Maidstone Borough Council Offices, Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone and Sessions House County Hall, Maidstone, during normal opening times.

If you wish to offer support for or object to the proposed Order you should send the grounds in writing for the attention of Network Performance Team, 1st Floor Invicta House, Invicta House, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XX by noon on Monday 4 April 2011.

HIGHWAYS - District of Sevenoaks

VARIOUS ROADS, WEST KINGSDOWN - (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst an event is carried out on or near the highway the KENT COUNTY COUNCIL intends to make an Order restricting the use by vehicular traffic on Various Roads, West Kingsdown as noted in schedule 1.

The Order will become effective on 28th March 2011, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the event is planned to last as noted in the schedule. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: as noted in schedule 1.

Schedule 1	
Restriction:	Temporary One Way Order Eastbound from 14.00 – 20.00 hours.
Road Name:	Scratchers Lane, West Kingsdown.
Extent:	From its junction with A20 London Road/Gorse Hill to its junction with Three Gates Lane.
Diversion:	A20 London Road and Fawkham Road.

Traffic lights will also be placed at the junction of A20 London Road and Gorse Hill that will be manually controlled between 14.00 – 20.00 hours to assist vehicles leaving Brands Hatch Race Circuit.

Restriction:	30mph Speed Limit.
Road Name:	A20 London Road/Gorse Hill, West Kingsdown.
Extent:	Between W J Kings Garage, London Road, Farnigham and Twenty Mile Texaco Petrol Station, West Kingsdown.
Restriction:	Suspend Cycle Lane Order.
Road Name:	A20 London Road/ Gorse Hill, West Kingsdown.
Extent 1:	Between Twenty Mile Texaco Petrol Station and Scratchers Lane
Extent 2:	Between Scratchers Lane and Twenty Mile Texaco Petrol Station.

Diversion:	Cyclists should dismount and walk along the pavement for the length of the restriction.
Restriction:	No Right Turn.
1:	Into Donkey Lane southbound from A20 London Road/Gorse Hill.
2:	Out of Donkey Lane onto A20 London Road/Gorse Hill.

Dates: 3rd April, 25th April, 24th July, 7th August, 4th September, 2nd October and 9th October 2011.

The purpose of the restrictions is to facilitate safety to road users and members of the public.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Swale

DAWES ROAD, DUNKIRK (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of water mains replacement works, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Dawes Road, Dunkirk, on or after 28 March 2011 for up to 9 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed between the junctions with Staplestreet Road and Stoney Road.

The alternative route is via Staplestreet Road, Canterbury Road, Boughton Hill, Canterbury Road and Courtenay Road.

BANISTER HILL & HEARTS DELIGHT, BORDEN (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

To allow BT access to an underground structure in the road, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Banister Hill & Hearts Delight, Borden, on or after 14 March 2011 for up to 3 days or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed between the junctions with Borden Lane and Hearts Delight Road.

The alternative route is via The Street, Pond Farm Road, Sutton Baron Road and Wrens Road.

It is planned the road will be closed between 9.30 am and 3.30 pm and re-opened outside these hours.

HIGHWAYS - District of Thanet

VARIOUS ROADS, MARGATE (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of gas mains replacement works, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Various Roads, Margate, on or after 28 March 2011 for up to 25 weeks or until the works have been completed.

DANE HILL, MARGATE will be closed at the junction with Dane Road, from 28 March for up to 3 weeks.

The alternative route is via King Street, Trinity Hill, Trinity Square and Northdown Road.

The One-way Traffic Order will be suspended to allow access only.

KING STREET, MARGATE will be closed between the junctions with Dane Road and Hawley Street.

From 18 April 2011 for up to 10 weeks.

The alternative route is via Addington Street, Union Crescent and Hawley Street

DANE HILL, MARGATE – will be closed for its entire length, from 27 June 2011 for up to 12 weeks.The alternative route is as shown above, with the One-way Traffic Order suspended to allow access only.

DANE HILL GROVE, MARGATE will be closed for its entire length, from 18 July 2011 for up to 2 weeks. There is no alternative route. Every effort will be made to maintain access whenever it is safe to do so.

The dates of the phases are approximate guidelines, and may vary subject to weather and ground conditions. The exact dates will be notified to local residents and businesses and signposted on site.

PARAGON STREET, RAMSGATE (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011

THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of works to provide a new gas supply, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Paragon Street, Ramsgate, on or after 28 March 2011 for up to 5 days or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed outside number 4.

The alternative route is via Addington Street, West Cliff Road and Royal Road.

The One-way Traffic Order in respect of Paragon Street will be suspended to allow access up to the point of closure.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Tonbridge & Malling

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(VARIOUS ROADS, TONBRIDGE AND MALLING)
(WAITING RESTRICTIONS AND ON-STREET PARKING PLACES)
(AMENDMENT NO 2) ORDER 2010

NOTICE is hereby given that KENT COUNTY COUNCIL propose to make the above named Order under sections 1(1) and (2), 2(1) to (3), 3(2), 4(1) and (2), 32(1), 35(1), 45, 46, 49 and 53 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and of all other enabling powers, and after consultation with the chief officer of police in accordance with Paragraph 20 of Schedule 9 to the Act:

The Order will have the effect of:-

- introducing no waiting at any time (double yellow lines) at the junction of Alexander Grove and Milton Lane, Kings Hill, West Malling;
- introducing “school keep clear” markings in Alexander Grove in the vicinity of the Kings Hill School, West Malling in the interest of public safety to all pedestrians crossing this road gaining access to and from the school.

The Order was sealed on 4 March 2011 and will come into force 14 March 2011.

Full details are contained in the Order which, together with the relevant plans, any Orders amended and a statement of the Council's reasons for making the Order may be examined on Mondays to Fridays at Mondays to Fridays at the Council Offices, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent and at Sessions House, Maidstone during normal opening times.

Any person wishing to question the validity of the Order or any of the provisions contained therein on the grounds that it is not within the powers of the relevant enabling Act or that any requirement of any such enabling Act or of any regulations made thereunder have not been complied with may within 6 weeks from the date on which the Order was made make application to the High Court for this purpose.

HIGHWAYS - Borough Of Tunbridge Wells

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(VARIOUS ROADS, SPELDHURST)
(WAITING RESTRICTIONS AND STREET PARKING PLACES) (CONSOLIDATION) (AMENDMENT NO 1) ORDER 2011

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (hereinafter referred to as “the Council”) acting as the local traffic authority and in exercise of its powers under Sections 1, 2, 4 and 124 of and Part IV of Schedule 9 to the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (hereinafter referred to as the “Act of 1984”) and as amended by the Traffic Management Act 2004 Part 6 and of all other enabling powers and after consultation with the Chief Officer of Police in accordance with Part III of Schedule 9 to the Act of 1984, hereby makes the following Order.

The effect of the Order will be to introduce no waiting at any time (double yellow lines) on the following roads or lengths of road in the village of Speldhurst:-

PENSHURST ROAD NORTHFIELDS	SOUTHFIELDS ST MARY'S LANE	BARDEN ROAD FURZFIELD AVENUE
----------------------------	----------------------------	------------------------------

Full details are contained in the draft Order which, together with the relevant plans, any Orders amended by the proposals and a statement of the Council's reasons for proposing to make the Order may be examined on Mondays to Fridays at the Council Offices, Town Hall, Civic Way, Royal Tunbridge Wells.

If you wish to offer support for or object to the proposed order you should send the grounds in writing to, Network Performance Team, 1st Floor Invicta House, Invicta House, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1xx by noon on Monday 4 April 2011.

Katherine Kerswell
Group Managing Director
Kent County Council
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent

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Vauxhall ups the Antara

First Drive

by
IAIN DOOLEY

Vauxhall Antara

AS ANY car executive will tell you, moving with the times is key to survival. Market trends and customer buying habits change so often now that the you can't stand still for even a moment.

When it was first launched, Vauxhall's Antara allowed the brand to move into the expanding 'soft-roader' market. The car's chunky looks and smart blend of Vauxhall design added a sense of familiarity to its go (almost) anywhere abilities thanks to the inclusion of all-wheel drive.

Second time around, and the Antara retains its trademark purposeful looks, although there's been a general tidy up fore and aft: new lights, grille. It also gains an electronic parking brake and a new diesel

engine in two states of tune plus the option of front-wheel drive. Mechanically these options fit well with the current focus on lower emissions and fuel consumption. A predictable but welcome refining of the car's on-road behaviour also forms part of the update package.

Aside from the on-paper changes, it shouldn't come as a surprise that the Antara is a spacious and accommodating car. What does come as a surprise is that it rivals some full-size SUVs for a general feeling of roominess, despite boasting a similar sized footprint to a conventional family estate.

The Antara's cabin also boasts a more up-market ambience. The use of quality plastics and contrasting trim materials have done much to boost the car's aesthetic appeal.

There's a school of thought that believes such a policy will help lure customers away from more expensive premium SUVs as some buyers choose to downsize for cost-saving reasons. Certainly, the general fit, finish and overall feel of the Antara's revised cabin lends considerable weight to this argument.

Out on the road the Antara corners well with a minimum of body roll and stops with little effort. The car's ride is generally compliant but Vauxhall's engineers have opted for a slightly firm setup to boost driver

enjoyment. And, even with big wheels fitted, the Antara copes well with the usual urban hazards.

Normally at this point it would be time to talk about the car's all-wheel drive performance. However, in line with an increasing number of rivals, front-wheel drive is now an option. Predictably this is a great choice for buyers who will never venture away from the security of Tarmac and are relatively undemanding when it comes to towing caravans or trailers. The trade off is a modest improvement in fuel consumption and CO2 emissions from the Antara's 2.2-litre diesel engine.

Effective

For some, though, the attraction of all-wheel drive is easy to justify. In reality the Antara's 'on demand' system offers the best of both worlds anyway. Only working when it's needed, the system is smart, effective and quick to respond, meaning the driver needn't worry too much about changing conditions.

Ordinarily, power is sent to the front wheels, but when a loss of grip is detected that balance can change to as much as 50 per cent to the rear wheels depending on the conditions. Factor in hill descent control and you're all set for that muddy hill ahead.

Of course, none of this would be possible

without the new 2.2-litre diesel engine. This Euro 5 specification motor can be had with either 163 or 184 horsepower, with the former also available for front-drive variants.

Aside from power outputs, the engines also boast wallet-friendly economy credentials. The low power unit combines 44.8mpg with a CO2 rating of 167g/km. The high power option delivers 42.8mpg and 175g/km CO2.

Both prove exceptionally quiet and refined on the road and lack the rattly attributes still a feature of some rivals' engines. Acceleration is brisk, especially with the 184 horsepower Antara, and the standard fit six-speed manual gearbox can be swapped for a six-speed auto – both new for the Antara.

Available in two trim levels and packing a considerable amount of standard fit safety and comfort equipment, Vauxhall's revised Antara offers drivers a refined and enjoyable driving experience.

As an alternative to a conventional family car, the five-seat SUV's practical cabin easily accommodated an active lifestyle, while the all-wheel drive element will be the icing on the cake for anyone seeking break away from the beaten track.



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*A guarantee may be required. Written quotations available on request from Peugeot Financial Services, Quadrant House, Princess Way, Redhill, RH1 1QA. Personal Lease contract examples. 308 Envy HDi 92 3dr initial rental £1595, optional final rental of £5205, 46 monthly rentals payable. 207 Envy HDi 70 3dr initial rental £795, optional final rental of £4206, 46 monthly rentals payable. If you choose to pay off the optional final rental at the end of contract, you can keep the car but will not own it – you will pay an annual rental equivalent to one of your monthly rentals. Excess mileage charges may apply. Offer available on vehicles ordered and registered by 31st March 2011. Model Exclusions apply.

FIRST GEAR

Compiled by Steve Loader



Hyundai stuns Geneva

HYUNDAI has confirmed that the D-segment in the motor market – popularly known as the Mondeo sector – is dominated increasingly by estate car models.

The ambitious Korean marque did so by using the current Geneva Motor Show for the world premiere of its new D-segment contender (pictured), the i40 and showing it only in estate or 'wagon' – it will arrive in the UK in this format soon, to be followed by a saloon later this year.

It's a sharp-suited offering penned by Hyundai's German-based design team, reflects the luxury-cum-lifestyle image of the modern estate car as it attempts to

beat MPV and crossover models on the market.

It also boasts features unavailable on some rivals, including heated folding rear seats; an auto-defog system; and heated steering wheel.

Hyundai also showed off its groundbreaking all-new three-door Veloster coupe – it has a rear door on the passenger side for greater useability – this a stunning looking coupe that doesn't have to be a 'holidays and high days' purchase.

And Geneva allowed the marque to show its Curb concept – an eye-catching urban crossover that will almost certainly see production in some form.

And now a fresh dash of Picanto

KIA – Hyundai's sister brand – has unveiled an all-new version of its Picanto city car.

And while the current Picanto is available only as a five-door hatchback, the next generation version will be offered in a sportier three-door, too.

The marque, currently riding high on the media and market acclaim for its muscular Sportage SUV/crossover, has announced the new Picanto's four powertrains will also be fresh out of the box and with the low and competitive CO2 emissions levels now demanded by a greener motor market.



Fiat retains green status



FIAT and its associated brands continue to set new standards in CO2 reduction, according to JATO Dynamics, the world's leading automotive consultancy.

Fiat Automobiles itself logged a CO2 average of just 123.1 g/km (4.7 g/km less than the 2009 average), placing it top of all brands for the fourth year running, and well ahead of the European target of 130g/km, due to be met in 2015.

Fiat also ranked first among the motor groups with 125.9g/km, an improvement of five g/km on last year and taking into account brands such as Ferrari, Maserati and Alfa Romeo.

However, the Italian group's CO2 crack-down continues to be epitomised by its big-selling small cars such as the Fiat 500C pictured – just the kind of models that eco-conscious consumers are now turning to.

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2010(60) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA ELITE CDTI TURBO MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 3000 miles,	£16,995
2010(60) VAUXHALL MERIVA SE CDTI TURBO MPV AUTO, GREY, 5000 miles,	£16,995
2010(10) VAUXHALL ASTRA ELITE SDR HATCH AUTO, GREEN, 950 miles,	£15,995
2010(60) VAUXHALL ASTRA SE SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 2000 miles,	£14,995
2010(60) MERCEDES-BENZ A CLASS A160 CLASSIC SE SDR HATCH AUTO, MOUNTAIN GREY, 1610 miles,	£13,995
2010(60) NISSAN CUBE KAIZEN SDR HATCH AUTO, WHITE, 1000 miles,	£12,995
2010(60) FORD FIESTA TITANIUM SDR HATCH AUTO, RED, 2000 miles,	£12,995
2010(60) NISSAN NOTE TEKNA MPV AUTO, BLACK, 500 miles,	£11,995
2009(09) FORD FOCUS ZETEC SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 3000 miles,	£10,995
2010(10) VAUXHALL MERIVA DESIGN 16V MPV AUTO, BLUE, 1000 miles,	£10,995
2010(10) VAUXHALL CORSA SE SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 1000 miles,	£10,995
2010(10) VAUXHALL CORSA EXCLUSIV AC SDR HATCH AUTO, GOLD, 6000 miles,	£9,995
2010(10) RENAULT GRAND MODUS DYNAMIQUE VVT SDR HATCH AUTO, OTTOMON BLUE, 1000 miles,	£9,995
2009(59) NISSAN NOTE VISIA MPV AUTO, GREY, 1800 miles,	£9,995
2010(10) RENAULT KANGOO EXPRESSION 16V MPV AUTO, BLUE, 1800 miles,	£9,995
2010(60) RENAULT MODUS GRAND DYNAMIQUE VVT SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 250 miles,	£9,995
2010(10) NISSAN MICRA TEKNA SDR HATCH AUTO, BLADE SILVER, 6000 miles,	£9,995
2010(10) FIAT PUNTO EVO DYNAMIC DUALOGIC SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 500 miles,	£9,495
2010(10) PEUGEOT 207 S 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 7000 miles,	£9,495
2009(59) SUZUKI SWIFT GLX SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 450 miles,	£9,495
2009(09) VAUXHALL AGILA DESIGN SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 5000 miles,	£8,995
2010(60) NISSAN PIXO N-TEC SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 999 miles,	£7,995
2009(59) CHEVROLET MATIZ SE SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 1100 miles,	£6,495

CONVERTIBLES CABRIOLETS COUPES

2009(09) MERCEDES-BENZ CLK CLK200 KOMPRESSOR AVANTGARDE CONVERTIBLE AUTO, BLACK, 20000 miles,	£23,995
2009(59) BMW 3 SERIES 320I SE COUPE AUTO, BRONZE, 4000 miles,	£19,995
2008(08) BMW 3 SERIES 320I SE COUPE AUTO, GREY, 10000 miles,	£18,995
2009(58) NISSAN MICRA 25 CONVERTIBLE CC CONVERTIBLE AUTO, EMOTION RED, 11000 miles,	£9,995
2007(57) PEUGEOT 307 S COUPE CABRIOLET COUPE AUTO, BLACK, 15000 miles,	£9,995
2006(56) RENAULT MEGANE PRIVILEGE VVT 111 CONVERTIBLE AUTO, BLUE, 14000 miles,	£8,995
2006(06) RENAULT MEGANE DYNAMIQUE VVT 111 CONVERTIBLE AUTO, BLUE, 21000 miles,	£7,995

NEW FIESTA

2010(60) FORD FIESTA TITANIUM SDR HATCH AUTO, RED, 2000 miles,	£12,995
2010(60) FORD FIESTA TITANIUM 3DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 2000 miles,	£11,995
2009(58) FORD FIESTA STYLE PLUS 3DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 3000 miles,	£8,995
2008(08) FORD FIESTA STYLE CLIMATE 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 9000 miles,	£6,995
2007(57) FORD FIESTA GHIA 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 16000 miles,	£6,995

FOCUS HATCH & SALOON

2009(09) FORD FOCUS ZETEC SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 3000 miles,	£10,995
2008(58) FORD FOCUS STYLE SDR HATCH AUTO, RED, 3000 miles,	£9,995
2008(08) FORD FOCUS ZETEC 3DR HATCH AUTO, GREEN, 4000 miles,	£8,995
2008(57) FORD FOCUS STYLE SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 14000 miles,	£8,995
2005(55) FORD FOCUS GHIA 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 27000 miles,	£6,495
2007(57) FORD FOCUS ZETEC CLIMATE 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, TONIC BLUE, 21000 miles,	£6,995
2005(54) FORD FOCUS LX SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 12000 miles,	£4,995

FOCUS ESTATES

2007(57) FORD FOCUS STYLE ESTATE AUTO, GREY, 12000 miles,	£6,495
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RENAULT SCENIC

2009(59) RENAULT GRAND SCENIC DYNAMIQUE DCI FAP TURBO MPV AUTO, BLUE, 6000 miles,	£16,995
2007(07) RENAULT GRAND SCENIC DYNAMIQUE VVT 136 T5TR MPV AUTO, BLUE, 8000 miles,	£8,995
2007(07) RENAULT GRAND SCENIC PRIVILEGE VVT 136 T5TR MPV AUTO, BLUE, 15000 miles,	£8,995
2007(07) RENAULT SCENIC PRIVILEGE VVT 111 S5TR MPV AUTO, RED, 13000 miles,	£7,995
2007(07) RENAULT SCENIC PRIVILEGE VVT 111 S5TR MPV AUTO, GREY, 10000 miles,	£7,995
2007(07) RENAULT SCENIC PRIVILEGE VVT 111 S5TR MPV AUTO, GREY, 26000 miles,	£7,995
2008(57) RENAULT SCENIC DYNAMIQUE VVT 111 S5TR MPV AUTO, BLUE, 19000 miles,	£6,995

RENAULT

2010(10) RENAULT GRAND MODUS DYNAMIQUE VVT SDR HATCH AUTO, OTTOMON BLUE, 1000 miles,	£9,995
2007(57) RENAULT MEGANE PRIVILEGE VVT 136 CONVERTIBLE AUTO, GOLD, 12000 miles,	£9,995
2010(10) RENAULT KANGOO EXPRESSION 16V MPV AUTO, BLUE, 1800 miles,	£9,995
2010(60) RENAULT KANGOO EXPRESSION 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 250 miles,	£9,995
2008(08) RENAULT GRAND SCENIC DYNAMIQUE VVT 136 T5TR MPV AUTO, GREEN, 15000 miles,	£8,995
2008(58) RENAULT MEGANE PRIVILEGE VVT 111 CONVERTIBLE AUTO, BLUE, 14000 miles,	£8,995
2006(06) RENAULT MEGANE DYNAMIQUE VVT 111 CONVERTIBLE AUTO, BLUE, 21000 miles,	£7,995
2008(58) RENAULT KANGOO AUTHENTIQUE 16V MPV AUTO, BLUE, 300 miles,	£7,995
2008(58) RENAULT KANGOO EXPRESSION 16V MPV AUTO, GREY, 1500 miles,	£7,495
2008(08) RENAULT KANGOO EXPRESSION 16V MPV AUTO, GREY, 12000 miles,	£6,995
2007(57) RENAULT MEGANE PRIVILEGE VVT 111 ESTATE AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 10000 miles,	£6,995
2006(56) RENAULT LAGUNA EXPRESSION SPORT TOURER 16V ESTATE AUTO, GREY, 8000 miles,	£6,995
2007(57) RENAULT MODUS DYNAMIQUE S VVT SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 9000 miles,	£6,495
2005(05) RENAULT KANGOO EXPRESSION 16V MPV AUTO, GREEN, 39000 miles,	£3,995

CHEVROLET

2008(08) CHEVROLET LACETTI SX SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 6000 miles,	£6,995
2008(58) CHEVROLET AVEO LT SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 999 miles,	£6,995
2008(09) CHEVROLET LACETTI SX ESTATE AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 3000 miles,	£6,995
2008(58) CHEVROLET LACETTI SX ESTATE AUTO, BLACK, 9000 miles,	£6,995
2009(59) CHEVROLET MATIZ SE SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 1100 miles,	£6,495
2008(57) CHEVROLET KALOS SX SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 18000 miles,	£5,495
2006(56) CHEVROLET LACETTI SX SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 15000 miles,	£4,995
2007(07) CHEVROLET MATIZ SE SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 18000 miles,	£4,495
2007(07) CHEVROLET MATIZ SE SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 8000 miles,	£4,495
2007(07) CHEVROLET MATIZ SE SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 20000 miles,	£4,495

HYUNDAI

2008(58) HYUNDAI MATRIX COMFORT MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 10000 miles,	£6,995
2008(58) HYUNDAI GETZ GSI SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 1000 miles,	£6,995
2009(59) HYUNDAI I10 COMFORT SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 2000 miles,	£6,995
2008(08) HYUNDAI MATRIX GSI MPV AUTO, RED, 7000 miles,	£6,495
2006(56) HYUNDAI GETZ CDX SDR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 9000 miles,	£5,995
2008(08) HYUNDAI AMICA CDX SDR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 24000 miles,	£5,995
2007(57) HYUNDAI ACENT LIMITED EDITION SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 6000 miles,	£5,995
2007(57) HYUNDAI MATRIX GSI SALOON AUTO, BLACK, 12000 miles,	£5,995
2008(08) HYUNDAI AMICA CDX SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 9000 miles,	£5,995
2007(07) HYUNDAI MATRIX GSI MPV AUTO, BLACK, 15000 miles,	£5,495
2004(54) HYUNDAI GETZ GSI SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 8000 miles,	£4,495
2006(06) HYUNDAI AMICA CDX SDR HATCH AUTO, RED, 18000 miles,	£3,995
2002(51) HYUNDAI AMICA SI SDR HATCH AUTO, YELLOW, 31000 miles,	£2,495

KIA

2009(09) KIA CEE'D GS SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 9000 miles,	£8,995
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DAIHATSU

2008(08) DAIHATSU SIRION SE SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 13000 miles,	£6,995
2008(08) DAIHATSU SIRION SE SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 8000 miles,	£6,995
2007(57) DAIHATSU SIRION SE SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 9000 miles,	£6,495
2007(07) DAIHATSU SIRION SE SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 16000 miles,	£5,995
2007(07) DAIHATSU SIRION 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 20000 miles,	£5,995

BMW

2009(59) BMW 3 SERIES 320I SE COUPE AUTO, BRONZE, 4000 miles,	£19,995
2008(08) BMW 3 SERIES 320I SE COUPE AUTO, GREY, 10000 miles,	£18,995

FIAT

2010(10) FIAT PUNTO EVO DYNAMIC DUALOGIC SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 500 miles,	£9,495
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FUSION

2010(10) FORD FUSION ZETEC SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 1800 miles,	£9,995
2008(08) FORD FUSION FUSION + SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 13000 miles,	£7,995
2009(09) FORD FUSION FUSION + SDR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 16000 miles,	£7,495
2006(56) FORD FUSION ZETEC CLIMATE SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 6000 miles,	£5,995

CITROEN

2007(57) CITROEN C3 SX 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, DIABLO RED, 13000 miles,	£5,995
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CORSA

2010(10) VAUXHALL CORSA SE SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 1000 miles,	£10,995
2010(10) VAUXHALL CORSA EXCLUSIV AC SDR HATCH AUTO, GOLD, 6000 miles,	£9,995
2009(59) VAUXHALL CORSA CLUB AC 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 750 miles,	£9,495
2009(58) VAUXHALL CORSA DESIGN 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 11000 miles,	£8,995
2008(58) VAUXHALL CORSA DESIGN 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 12000 miles,	£8,995
2009(09) VAUXHALL CORSA CLUB AC 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, ULTRA BLUE, 4000 miles,	£8,995
2008(58) VAUXHALL CORSA CLUB AC 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 5000 miles,	£8,495
2008(58) VAUXHALL CORSA CLUB AC 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 9000 miles,	£8,495
2008(58) VAUXHALL CORSA DESIGN 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 11000 miles,	£7,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL CORSA DESIGN 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, GOLD, 5000 miles,	£7,495
2005(54) VAUXHALL CORSA DESIGN 16V SDR HATCH AUTO, RED, 4000 miles,	£5,495

MAZDA

2008(58) MAZDA 3 3 TAKARA SDR HATCH AUTO, RED, 5000 miles,	£9,995
2008(08) MAZDA 3 3 TS2 SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 17000 miles,	£8,995
2006(56) MAZDA 6 6 TS SDR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 21000 miles,	£7,995
2007(57) MAZDA 3 3 TS SDR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 8000 miles,	£7,995
2007(57) MAZDA 2 2 CAPPELLA SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 15000 miles,	£6,495
2007(56) MAZDA 2 2 S SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 17000 miles,	£5,995

SUZUKI

2009(59) SUZUKI SWIFT GLX SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 450 miles,	£9,495
2009(57) SUZUKI SWIFT GLX SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 5000 miles,	£8,995
2007(57) SUZUKI SX4 GLX SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 21000 miles,	£7,495

TOYOTA

2007(57) TOYOTA PRIUS T SPIRIT VVT-I SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 8000 miles,	£12,995
2010(10) TOYOTA IQ VVT-I IQ 3DR HATCH AUTO, PURPLE, 6000 miles,	£8,495
2007(57) TOYOTA AURIS T SPIRIT VVT-I MM SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 14000 miles,	£8,995
2007(07) TOYOTA AURIS T3 VVT-I MM SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 17000 miles,	£8,995
2007(07) TOYOTA COROLLA T3 VVT-I SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 9000 miles,	£8,995
2008(58) TOYOTA YARIS T3 VVT-I SDR HATCH AUTO, VENETIAN SILVER, 14000 miles,	£7,995
2005(05) TOYOTA YARIS VERSO T SPIRIT VVT-I MPV AUTO, CHAMPAGNE, 9000 miles,	£7,995
2005(54) TOYOTA YARIS VERSO T SPIRIT VVT-I MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 9000 miles,	£7,495
2005(55) TOYOTA YARIS T SPIRIT VVT-I SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 5000 miles,	£7,495
2005(55) TOYOTA YARIS T SPIRIT VVT-I SDR HATCH AUTO, CRYSTAL SILVER, 5000 miles,	£6,995
2007(07) TOYOTA YARIS T3 VVT-I MM SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 21000 miles,	£6,995
2005(05) TOYOTA YARIS T SPIRIT VVT-I SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 12000 miles,	£6,995
2005(55) TOYOTA YARIS VERSO T3 VVT-I MPV AUTO, CHAMPAGNE, 25000 miles,	£6,495
2004(04) TOYOTA YARIS T SPIRIT VVT-I SDR HATCH, BLACK, 25000 miles,	£5,495

NISSAN

2010(10) NISSAN QASHQAI TEKNA SDR HATCH AUTO, BLADE SILVER, 10000 miles,	£19,995
2009(09) NISSAN QASHQAI TEKNA SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 8000 miles,	£17,995
2009(09) NISSAN QASHQAI ACENTA SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 9000 miles,	£15,995
2009(09) NISSAN QASHQAI ACENTA SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 17000 miles,	£15,995
2009(09) NISSAN QASHQAI ACENTA SDR HATCH AUTO, ORANGE, 7000 miles,	£15,995
2008(58) NISSAN QASHQAI ACENTA SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 2000 miles,	£15,495
2010(60) NISSAN QASHQAI ACENTA SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 14000 miles,	£14,995
2010(59) NISSAN CUBE KAIZEN SDR HATCH AUTO, WHITE, 1000 miles,	£12,995
2007(57) NISSAN QASHQAI ACENTA SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 21000 miles,	£12,995
2010(60) NISSAN NOTE TEKNA MPV AUTO, BLACK, 500 miles,	£11,995
2009(58) NISSAN MICRA 25 CONVERTIBLE CC CONVERTIBLE AUTO, EMOTION RED, 11000 miles,	£9,995
2010(10) NISSAN MICRA TEKNA SDR HATCH AUTO, BLADE SILVER, 6000 miles,	£9,995
2009(59) NISSAN NOTE VISIA MPV AUTO, GREY, 1800 miles,	£9,995
2009(59) NISSAN MICRA ACENTA SDR HATCH AUTO, RED, 7000 miles,	£8,495
2009(59) NISSAN MICRA ACENTA SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 8000 miles,	£8,495
2010(60) NISSAN PIXO N-TEC SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 999 miles,	£7,995
2008(08) NISSAN NOTE TEKNA MPV AUTO, BLACK, 7000 miles,	£7,995
2010(59) NISSAN PIXO N-TEC SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 3000 miles,	£6,995
2007(57) NISSAN MICRA ACENTA PLUS SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 12000 miles,	£6,995
2007(57) NISSAN MICRA SPIRITA SDR HATCH AUTO, RED, 18000 miles,	£6,995
2007(57) NISSAN MICRA ACENTA SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 15000 miles,	£6,995
2007(57) NISSAN MICRA SPIRITA SDR HATCH AUTO, RED, 11000 miles,	£6,495
2006(56) NISSAN NOTE SE MPV AUTO, ORANGE, 21000 miles,	£5,995
2005(05) NISSAN ALMERA S SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 11000 miles,	£4,995
2002(02) NISSAN MICRA S SDR HATCH AUTO, WHITE, 10000 miles,	£2,995

ASTRA HATCHBACKS

2010(10) VAUXHALL ASTRA ELITE SDR HATCH AUTO, GREEN, 950 miles,	£15,995
2010(60) VAUXHALL ASTRA SE SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 2000 miles,	£14,995
2009(59) VAUXHALL ASTRA ELITE SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 8000 miles,	£11,995
2009(59) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN SDR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 5000 miles,	£9,495
2010(59) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 12000 miles,	£9,495
2009(59) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 2000 miles,	£8,995
2009(09) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, SILVER LIGHTNING, 14000 miles,	£8,995
2009(58) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 8000 miles,	£8,495
2008(58) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 30000 miles,	£8,495
2007(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, ULTRA BLUE, 11000 miles,	£7,495
2007(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 19000 miles,	£6,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, TURQUOISE, 20000 miles,	£6,995
2008(08) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, BEIGE/BUFF, 14000 miles,	£6,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 17000 miles,	£6,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 19000 miles,	£5,995
2008(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V E4 SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 9000 miles,	£5,995

ASTRA ESTATES

2008(58) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 140 ESTATE AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 8000 miles,	£7,995
2008(08) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 140 ESTATE AUTO, SILVER, 14000 miles,	£6,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 140 ESTATE AUTO, BLUE, 14000 miles,	£6,995
2008(08) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 140 ESTATE AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 12000 miles,	£6,995
2006(56) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V ESTATE AUTO, PANACOTTA, 16000 miles,	£6,495
2006(56) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V ESTATE AUTO, BLACK, 11000 miles,	£5,995

ZAFIRA MERIVA & AGILA

2009(59) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA EXCLUSIV CDTI TO MPV AUTO, ICE GREEN, 7000 miles,	£12,995
2010(10) VAUXHALL MERIVA DESIGN 16V MPV AUTO, BLUE, 1000 miles,	£10,995
2008(08) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA DESIGN DIRECT MPV AUTO, BLUE, 850 miles,	£10,995
2008(08) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 12000 miles,	£9,995
2009(59) VAUXHALL MERIVA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, GOLD, 3000 miles,	£9,995
2009(59) VAUXHALL AGILA DESIGN SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 5000 miles,	£9,995
2009(59) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, TURQUOISE, 13000 miles,	£7,995
2009(59) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, BLUE, 5000 miles,	£7,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, PANNACOTA, 11000 miles,	£7,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 14000 miles,	£7,995
2009(59) VAUXHALL MERIVA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, BLUE, 6000 miles,	£6,995
2008(54) CHEVROLET MATIZ SE SDR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 1000 miles,	£5,995
2004(54) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 78000 miles,	£3,995

DrivingReview

by
DAVE MAIRS

Kia Ceed

YOU know how it is. You've got an exciting trip planned and you and your mates have a barrow-load of gear to take with you.

And at some point someone – invariably the sensible, boring one – mentions transport. Quite how you and your grizzled chums, along with rucksacks, seats, telescopes and tripods – we were going to watch whales from aboard the ferry to Bilbao – are going to cram into your little runabout hadn't occurred to you though.

After much casting around, we borrowed a Kia Ceed 1.6 CRDi ISG. It is not a monster – think Ford Focus for size – but was larger than anything we had to hand.

As things worked out, travel plans changed and the whole operation became a two-car mission with just three in our vehicle. No bad thing though, as three people and their clobber was enough for this model.

We could have managed four, but it would have been a real squeeze and we might never have seen a pygmy-sized member of the party ever again.

However, as we all know, size isn't everything, as shown by the outstanding feature on the Ceed ISG – those last three letters are short for Intelligent Stop and Go.

The system works like this: when the car slows to below 3mph, say when approaching a junction or traffic lights, it stops. You select neutral and release the clutch and then simply restart when ready by depressing the clutch – 10 per cent, for the record, but I

Ceed proof there is nothing to concede when going green



don't expect you to measure it – and away you go, smoothly and wholly efficiently.

We're talking Kia's EcoDynamics technology here: an official combined fuel consumption of 67.3mpg on this Ceed and CO2 emissions of just 110g/km that also qualifies the car

for zero-rated road tax for year one and just £20/year thereafter.

In short, the less time your engine is running, the better it is for both your pocket and your beleaguered environment.

The scientific bit is not my world, but as a

driver I can happily report that, once I'd got used to it, I grew rather fond of the ISG system. All was smooth, with no juddering, and it was easy to believe that here was a glimpse at a brave new (and not quite as dirty) world.

The Ceed range arrived in 2007; an all-new

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Vehicle shown is an Orlando 2.0 VCDi LTZ with metallic paint at an extra cost of £410, and an Executive Pack at an optional cost of £2,000. Under the Motability Contract Hire Scheme for new cars, a driver can get the use of an Orlando 2.0 VCDi LS for 3 years by paying the Fixed Weekly Rentals from the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance, with an Advance Payment of £349. For applications approved by 31st March 2011. The facilities offered are for the hire (bailment) of goods. The Motability Contract Hire Scheme is administered by Motability Operations Limited (Registered Company No. 1373876), City Gate House, 22 Southwark Bridge Road, London, SE1 9HB. To qualify you must be in receipt of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance or War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement which will be taken in lieu of the monthly rental. Full written details, including terms and conditions, are available on request. All figures correct at time of going to press. Calls may be recorded and monitored for training purposes.

Official Government Environment Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km). Orlando range: Urban - 29.1 (9.7) - 35.8 (7.9), Extra-urban - 47.9 (5.9) - 57.7 (4.9), Combined - 38.7 (7.3) - 47.1 (6.0). CO₂ emissions 186 - 159g/km.



model and name, designed and built in Europe to attack Europe's finest – the VW Golf, Ford Focus and Vauxhall Astra – and featuring facets from all three, plus a mould-breaking seven-year/100,000-mile warranty as a significant extra.

This was the perfect lure for the most sceptical punters; once in the showroom, the curious could quickly see that the Ceed and its three-door Procead and Ceed SW estate spin-offs are good products

Kia now concedes that the mega-warranty was a gamble that could have gone expensive-ly wrong if the Ceed engineering team had



messed up, but it didn't and all Kia models now come with a seven-year warranty. Aware that the 2007-vintage Ceed could

be fidgety on the road, Kia also boosted the handling and ride when it gave the car a facelift in 2010.

As for new kit, Kia says the car has an upgraded interior, though this looked about the same as before; no criticism though, since everything feels well-made and durable.

There are also exterior cosmetics, notably a far sleeker and more upmarket grille.


But ISG on the car's junior 89bhp 1.6-litre/six-speed manual diesel powertrain is the highlight of the revamp and using Kia's new green 'EcoDynamics' sub-branding with energy-saving tyres. Ceed prices start at £13,085.


DrivingPortfolio

KIA CEED 2 CRDI ECODYNAMICS 1.6 5-DR £15,600

Driving appeal (OUT OF FIVE)	★★★★
Image	★★★
Space	★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★
How green?	★★★★
Road tax	£20/year (zero year one)
Best rival	Seat Leon Ecomotive

TheVerdict

**DON'T LIKE:**
the Ceed's so-so image, even if it is great value

**NOT SURE:**
the green Ceed is worth extra when the standard is so economical already

**REALLY LIKE:**
how the Ceed highlights Kia's rapid progress and 'can do' image

KENT DEALERS

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Maidstone Kia	0845 1264735
Autoplanet Tunbridge Wells	0845 126 4738
Gillingham – Hidsons	0845 1264778
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Deposit	£183.00	Option to purchase fee ²	£60
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SEAT IBIZA 1.2 FREERIDER 3DR..... 23125

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Model shown Ibiza SC Chill 1.4 SE 85PS £9,995RRP. Finance offer applies to Ibiza SC 1.4 SE Chill, sold and registered before 31st March 2011. Retail Sales only. Subject to vehicle availability. ¹Payable with first payment. ²Payable with optional final payment. #4.80p per mile excess mileage charges apply. Further charges may be payable if vehicle is returned. Indemnities may be required. Subject to status. Available to over 18's from participating dealers only. SEAT Finance, Freeport SEAT Finance. Offer may be varied or withdrawn at any time. Official fuel consumption for the SEAT Ibiza SC in mpg (litres per 100km); urban 34 (8.3) - 67.3 (4.2); extra-urban 53.3 (5.3) - 91.1 (3.1); combined 44.1 (6.4) - 80.7 (3.5). CO₂ emissions 148 - 92 g/km.

My Money 24

Online this week at

www.mymoney24.co.uk:

This offer looks good – what's the catch?

Q I would be grateful for your opinion of the new Post Office bond that pays a yield of 1.5pc on top of the rate of inflation. I have read the terms and as far as I can see, the only downside is that you cannot withdraw your money for five years without providing a good reason and paying a penalty. I am happy with this, so is there anything else that I have missed?

NR

A There are two things you may have missed. Firstly, the return on the Post Office bond may not be calculated in exactly the way you think. And secondly, there is at least one rival index-linked product you might consider. The Post Office (0800 169 7500) bond is a five-year investment, with the return to savers calculated every April. So, if you invest, say, £1,000 and the retail prices index in April next year shows an annual rise of 5pc, your £1,000 will grow by 5pc plus the guaranteed 1.5pc top-up, turning it into £1,065. Now, you might think that in Year Two, your return is based on £1,065. Wrong! Your money goes back to square one. The £65 you have earned is frozen, and you start again with £1,000. The profits are paid out only at the end of the full five years. They are not compounded to earn even more as you go along. Of course, you might regard this as a small blot on an otherwise pretty landscape. After all, there are not many index-linked investments to choose from. But there is one that has a couple of advantages of its own. Yorkshire Building Society's Protected Capital Account (0845 1200 100) pays the rate of inflation plus 0.1pc – but it pays income yearly throughout its five-year life. And, unlike the Post Office bond, you can hold this account as a tax-free Isa, which adds to the attraction. So if you want to draw an income or sidestep tax, this could be a better bet.

Q I have about £7,000 in a Natwest cash Isa, earning 0.5pc. Santander is offering 3.5pc. Should I take my money out of Natwest and open a Santander account? How can one bank pay so much more than another?

A Whatever you do, don't take your Isa money from Natwest and think you can simply deposit it with Santander. If you withdraw money from an Isa, it loses its tax-free status. To stay tax-free, arrange for your existing bank to transfer the cash directly to your new bank. You must not touch it. But should you transfer? You are not really comparing like with like. The statement you sent me shows you have a cheap-and-cheerful Isa with Natwest. It has a variable interest rate that could rise if rates generally go up, you can operate it at your branch, and you are allowed instant access. The Santander leaflet you sent me offers a fixed 3.5pc, not a variable rate. You invest by post, not

TONY HETHERINGTON MONEY CLINIC



at a branch, and this is a two-year account that ties you in until 2013. If you are happy with the different terms, that's fine. But if you want the easy access that you have now, a better option might be the Halifax Isa Direct Reward account. It offers instant access, can be operated through a branch and pays 3pc interest.

Q I have a small private pension plan that matures in May. My pension provider told me I have the option to look on the open market for an annuity. I have found a company that beats my original annuity quote. As these firms must be registered with the Financial Services Authority, are there any problems I should be aware of?

A Anyone saving in a private pension plan has the right to shop around on the open market before turning their retirement savings into an annuity. The company that has managed your pension investments might not offer the best value annuity, so it is good to see that you were actually reminded that you have this right. As all annuity firms go through the same licensing checks, and are covered by the same compensation scheme, there are no hidden dangers.

Q My son banked a cheque I gave him. The money has gone from my account but has not appeared in his. His bank says it is still in the system, a week after he deposited the cheque.

A Your son's bank should show the money as available for his use from the fourth working day after he deposited the cheque. Even including a weekend would only take us up to six days, so if your son has been waiting a week, something seems wrong. He should complain to the bank and if there is no explanation, he should contact the Financial Ombudsman (0800 2234 567).

Q Are student loan repayments just based on income, or could I be made to hand over some money I have inherited?

A Repayments are linked to your income and normally collected through the tax system. Your inheritance is not affected.

■ If you have a personal-finance question, write to Tony Hetherington, MyMoney24, Prospect House, Rouen Road, Norwich NR1 1RE. We regret that neither Tony nor the MyMoney24 team can enter into personal correspondence.

Don't leave us hanging on – it's so annoying

Listening to hold music on the telephone or standing in long queues is something that winds many people up – and if it annoys you, you're unlikely to be cheered up by the revelation that we each spend an average of 33 weeks of our lives doing it. A study by the Co-operative Bank has found that the average hold time per phone call is 10 minutes. That might be frustrating enough in itself, but some callers have been left twiddling their thumbs for more than an hour-and-a-half. The top culprits for leaving customers on hold are dominated by television, internet and phone providers, domestic energy suppliers, banks and insurance companies.

The worst queues are at supermarkets, banks and post offices.

In the short term, such shabby customer service leads to anger and frustration.

Scots are apparently the least patient people when being made to wait on the phone, with callers typically hanging up after being left hanging on for about 20 minutes.

However, the research highlighted that consumers would vote with their feet if they were let down by poor service, with a third prepared to move their custom after being



PLEASE HOLD... On average we spend 33 weeks of our lives hanging on the telephone or waiting in queues.

continually left on hold. "We've all been there, waiting on the other end of the line or stood in line when all we want to do is speak with a human being and get our problem resolved, query answered or purchase paid for,"

said Robin Taylor, head of banking at the Co-op. "However, customers don't need to put up with bad service like this. "They can always switch to an alternative provider."

Pensions changes 'a turning point'

The announcement this week that the state pensions system is to be given a complete overhaul has received a broad welcome from analysts, with one expert branding it "a turning point".

Work and pensions secretary Iain Duncan Smith said the existing system was too complex and means testing for pensioners discouraged many people from saving for retirement.

Although he did not unveil the details, there has been speculation that a single-tier pension could be worth about £140 a week. (Single people who receive the full state pension and pension credit currently get £132.60 a week.)

A move to a flat-rate state pension would remove disincentives for lower earners to build up savings, and such a change would be likely to benefit mothers, who currently lose out because of career breaks for raising children.

By ADAM AIKEN
MyMoney24 editor

Joanne Segars, chief executive of the National Association of Pension Funds, was among those welcoming the announcement. "We are at a turning point for pensions in the UK," she said. "Radical state pension reform to create a single, simple and more generous state pension could take millions of pensioners out of poverty, and provide a firm foundation for saving for old age. For the first time in a generation, people would know that it pays to save."

"This is a golden opportunity for the government to begin meeting its commitment to 'reinvigorate occupational pensions' and to get the nation saving again. This comes not a moment too soon."

The latest quarterly Real Retirement Report produced by Aviva suggested that more than two thirds of people

did not know, or overestimate, the value of the state pension.

"Simplification will help to address this confusion and could encourage customers to make plans for their own retirement," said Paul Goodwin, head of pensions marketing at the insurer.

"With greater understanding of what individuals can expect from the state, people will be better placed to plan their own private savings."

There was also support for the news from accountants.

John Nunn, senior financial planning consultant at PKF, said: "Too often, people who have taken the trouble to save extra for their pensions find that their savings make them ineligible for pension credits and other benefits – so they end up paying twice for what they have. Meanwhile, those who have not bothered to save and just rely on the state pension get everything."

In the news

Savings suffer
as we pay off
our debts

**Best buys**

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the best
annuity rates

**On the blogs**

Adam Aiken:

Credit card offer could be an
expensive gimmick

Taxman aiming to put a plug in the payments leak

By **ADAM AIKEN**
MyMoney24 editor

People who work in and around the plumbing sector are the latest to be targeted by the authorities in a clampdown on people failing to declare their earnings and pay the right amount of tax.

Under a plan announced by HM Revenue & Customs, plumbers, gas fitters, heating engineers and members of associated trades who have undeclared tax to pay can come forward until the end of May to disclose what they owe.

Most people who make full disclosures will have to pay penalties of 10pc, with maximum penalties of 20pc.

They have until the end of August to make their disclosures and arrange payment.

HMRC said it would carry out investigations after that date, targeting those who have failed to come forward and make full declarations.

Anyone caught out by that move faces a "substantial" penalty and criminal prosecution.

"Our aim is to make it as easy as possible for plumbers to come forward, make a full disclosure and benefit from a reduced penalty," said Mike Wells, director of risk and intelligence at HMRC.

"We will be using various intelligence sources to target plumbers who have not declared their full income.

"I strongly urge any in this group who think they may owe tax on their income to get in touch with HMRC and get their tax affairs in order simply, and on the best available terms.

"This is the first step in enabling those with undisclosed income or gains to avoid a full tax investigation with much higher penalties. The message is clear: contact us before we contact you."

Self-employed people who know they have made errors or omissions on their tax returns should take



CLAMPDOWN: Plumbers are the latest to be targeted in a bid to catch people failing to declare their earnings.

advantage of the amnesty, said Graham Sillett, tax partner of chartered accountants Lovewell Blake.

He said: "This is a generous offer. It is an opportunity to come clean where mistakes have been made, with penalties as low as 10pc."

Plumbers, gas fitters and heating engineers were being targeted because HMRC had obtained information from their trade organisation, but Mr Sillett said there were also indications that the amnesty could also be used by

businesses generally.

It is the third such campaign run by HMRC in recent years. People with offshore accounts as well as doctors and dentists have already been in the spotlight.

Mr Sillett said the previous campaigns had resulted in significant numbers of people coming forward to make voluntary disclosures.

■ If you want to make a tax disclosure, complete a notification form at www.hmrc.gov.uk/plumberstaxsafeplan or call 0845 600 4507.

“ This is a generous offer. It is an opportunity to come clean where mistakes have been made

Graham Sillett

Isa countdown under way

The annual fight by Isa providers to get hold of people's cash is well and truly under way, with a number of new tax-free accounts being launched recently.

Anyone over 16 is allowed to invest up to £5,100 in a cash Isa in the 2010-11 tax year, but you cannot carry the allowance over. That means there is now less than a month to use this year's allowance before it is lost for good.

The banks and other financial providers know that many of us leave it until the last moment

before taking action, which is why there is traditionally a spate of new products launched around this time.

According to Moneyfacts.co.uk, there are more cash Isas with introductory bonuses available today than at the same time in the past two years. Introductory bonuses can make accounts very attractive, but prospective customers need to remember that the rates they pay typically plummet to uncompetitive levels once the bonus period – which usually lasts 12 months – is up.

Spending on cars to rise

The amount of money we are collectively planning to spend on cars over the next six months has hit a three-year high of £51.3bn, even though the number of people expecting to get a new or second-hand car has fallen slightly over the past half-year to 7.15 million.

The figures, compiled by Sainsbury's Finance, suggest that the average spend on a car will be about £7,170 – up more than £500 on six months ago. "Although the number of people looking to buy a car has slightly dropped, the car industry should not be disheartened as the figures in this latest index present a much more

encouraging picture for the sector than they did just 18 months to two years ago," said Steven Baillie, head of loans at Sainsbury's Finance.

"The VAT rise that came into force at the beginning of the year does not seem to be putting people off making a car purchase, and consumers appear to be realistic in knowing they are likely to need to spend a bit more."

The research also found that about one in five of those looking to buy a car will want to finance at least part of the purchase with a loan. It is thought that personal loans of £6.2bn will be advanced for this purpose over the next six months.

PICK OF THE WEEK

In association with the experts at **Moneyfacts.co.uk**, we highlight some of the best new products launched this week.

Savings: Barclays

Barclays has released its Golden Isa Issue 3. This instant-access cash Isa pays a rate of 3.2pc, including a 1pc bonus for 12 months. (As with any rate including an introductory bonus, savers must be aware that the rate will revert to a lower figure once the bonus period expires.) The rate is guaranteed to follow any change in the base rate until March 1, 2012. The minimum investment is £1. Transfers in are not allowed. The account is available to investors aged 16 and over and can be operated in branch. Savers can also operate this account by telephone or online but they must have existing current accounts.

Why is it good?

With a minimum investment amount of just £1 and a market leading rate, this new deal from Barclays has secured its place as one of the market-leading no-notice Isas.

Savings: Saga

Saga has increased the rate on its Three-Year Fixed-Rate Savings account, available via post only, to 4.2pc and it has launched an online-only version of the account. A monthly interest option is also available, paying 4.12pc. Savers can invest between £1 and £10m and further additions can be made whilst the issue remains open. Early access is allowed subject to penalty, depending on the account's remaining term, as follows: up to three years, 270 days; up to two years, 180 days; one year or less, 90 days. The accounts are available to savers aged 50 and over.

Why is it good?

Saga's latest product review sees a rate increase of 0.35pc to its Three-Year Fixed Rate Savings account as well as the online launch. Paying 4.2pc, these deals sit amongst the other market-leading rates. Both bonds have the flexibility for withdrawals to be made during their terms.

Mortgages: Woolwich

Woolwich (part of Barclays) has launched a fixed-rate deal costing 3.99pc to April 30, 2013. The maximum loan-to-value is 70pc and customers can borrow between £50,000 and £1m.

There is an arrangement fee of £199 and incentives of a free valuation fee for properties valued up to £2m. Remortgage borrowers can enjoy free legal fees and a £200 rebate.

Why is it good?

This fixed-rate mortgage offers customers with deposits of at least 30pc a competitive rate for two years. The deal has a small arrangement fee and a range of incentives are offered both to purchase and to remortgage borrowers. Flexible features such as the option to make overpayments and take payment holidays are also offered.

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Women Seeking

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ATTRACTIVE vibrant mid 60's female, independent, likes music, travel, socialising, seeks cultured, energetic, cultured male. Maidstone. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 384766

35YR old outgoing discreet female looking for someone who WILTM up for fun adult dates. Can accommodate. Any age/status. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361757

FLIRTY 30, very attractive confident slim brunette, looking for fun times with broadminded male. Single dad welcome. Can accommodate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361755

VOLUPTUOUS attractive tanned, well groomed blonde 39, looking for good times, pampering, massages and discreet friendship. ACA. Any age/looks. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361751

GORGEOUS looking lonely lass 28, OHAC, no ties, looking for some romantic liaisons with older male. ACA/looks unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361731

HI I am Sandy, an attractive 38yr old nurse looking for some off duty passion with affectionate open-minded man. Any age. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361729

MANDY early 40's, slightly alternative, looking for similar open minded male for fun nights in/out. Can accommodate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361727

YOUNG 40's lady who loves cooking and enjoying good wine, WILTM old male for cosy nights in and great company. Status unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 359163

ORIENTAL female, 27, seeks older gent, 65 plus to take care of me. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362207

BEAUTIFUL slim, sexy female, 22, seeks older gent, 65 plus to take care of me. London. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362201

PRETTY woman, slim, black, widow, 39, energetic, seeks white male, solvent male for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360695

MAIL/GUARDIAN reader? Arty, vivacious female, 61, happy in own skin, seeks N/S sociable, warm, loving man. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360655

LADY slim, brunette, N/S, likes music, National Trust, theatre, days out, seeks sincere, honest gent, 48-60 for friendship, maybe more. Kent/Sussex. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360633

SINGLE female, 60, sincere, caring, likes most things, seeks male, 60-65, N/S with GSOH for companionship and LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360557

WARM well educated 60's female, seeks similar gent to enjoy the simple things of life. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360477

BETH young minded widow, 65, 5ft 5ins, happy, size 14, N/S, many interests, seeks sincere, honest gent for friendship who might admit to some aching bones. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 344291

SAM 37, attractive, size 16, friendly, bubbly, seeks sincere, genuine male, 35-50. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 384334

ATTRACTIVE lady, seeks kind, solvent male for romance and possibly love. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360159

ISABELLE lovely lady, genuine, honest, loving, caring, 68, N/S, non drinker, slightly disabled, WILTM male for love, companionship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 347305

KATHY long blonde hair, blue eyes, 60, likes mowtown music, nights in/out, seeks gent, 47-62. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361797

BARBARA 46, seeks nice, stocky male up to 50 for friendship, maybe more. Heathrow. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361701

SALLY independent, intelligent, confident, caring female, seeking a similar soul mate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361575

SLIM attractive, elegant Asian female, likes travel, restaurants, cinema, seeks caring, Asian male, 45-55 for friendship, possible relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361571

NAUGHTY but extremely nice 27yr old curvy, sensual, feminine female, seeking similar minded male for lots of fun. Any age/can accommodate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361383

6FT blonde leggy ex lingerie model 33, looking for good times with free thinking male. Single dad welcome. Any age. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361381

CURVY sophisticated Irish lady 36, new to the area and lonely. WILTM male up to 69yrs for companionship, cosy nights in/out. Status unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361379

KAREN tall slim feminine, 40, WILTM genuine male who will keep me warm and cosy up for romantic nights in/out. ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361357

57YR old voluptuous lady, works, divorced, likes beach, meals out, theatre, travel, weekends away, seeks white male, 56-61 with GSOH for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 359685

HONEST caring, genuine female, 44, GSOH, likes meals out, nights in, seeks similar male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381844

MARY 62, 5ft 3ins, medium build, blonde, blue eyes, likes nights in/out, seeks honest male for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 359467

FEMALE 25, professional, likes nights out, socialising, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360961

FUN loving country girl, 48, seeks male for friendship/relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 384488

FEMALE seeks N/S, clean, tidy white male, 42-50 for friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361049

A rare diamond, bright, sparkly and good quality, let me put the sparkle back into your life. Wanted professional, attractive male, 38-58, medium build, 5ft 9ins. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361005

5FT 4ins, slim, medium build, long hair, blue eyes, likes keep fit, animals, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 384482



SUE 59, divorced, likes walks, cinema, meals out, antiques, seeks genuine, faithful guy for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360923

SUZANNE 35, beautiful blonde, seeks discreet male for chats and a relaxing glass of wine anytime. ACA, status unimportant. City area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 342527

ELIZABETH caring, honest, reliable, likes most things, seeks older gent, late 70's for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 359599

LOOKING for relaxation and fun? Attractive 49yr old nurse waiting to raise the temperature of broadminded, fun companion! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361355

HI I'm Sandra a vivacious animal loving leggy blonde, 33yrs, looking for discreet male for fun times and more. Any age. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361351

42YR old female, likes music, dancing, writing, astrology, cats, seeks male with GSOH and similar age. Medway. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 351577

CARING young 62 petite blonde, seeks someone to share doing things with, theatre, dancing and perhaps nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 359761

FAYE N/S, non drinker, lots of love to give, seeks special, genuine, honest male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 349309

PATRICIA outgoing, confident, feminine, warm, friendly, smart, good company, attractive, seeks similar male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 347215

52YR old female, likes walks, animals, theatre, cinema, seeks male for companionship/LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 357291

LATE 20's female seeking older male. Call to hear exactly what I'm like and looking for. I can meet anywhere in London at any time. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 356995

TALL slim brunette, just 21yrs seeks interesting older male who knows what's what, show me the ways of the world. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 356969

SOUTH London Lady, full figure with long hair, curves in all the right places. WILTM male of any age for fun, friendship and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 356989

FUN loving student, 21yrs, seeks male of any age for fun in London, can travel and accommodate. I love a risk and having fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 356981

FOREIGN beauty, long, long hair, 20's yrs, seeks older male who can spoil someone like me. London area. Discretion assured. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 356967

FEMININE lady who knows how to treat her man seeks strong minded male to care for, any area London/Surrey/Kent. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 356985

SEALED with a kiss. 37yr old single mum, blonde hair, blue eyes, curvy, likes sunshine, travel, looking for Knight in shining armour, to make me laugh and spoil me. Folkestone. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 355543

LADY 44, GSOH, short, curvy, dark hair, seeks good guy for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 355391

DEBBIE mid 50's, attractive, likes dancing, music, cinema, theatre, seeks male for companionship. Maidstone. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 351419

BUBBLY outgoing nurse (I love my uniform), fancy meeting up North London for some fun loving fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 356983

Men Seeking

IF YOU'RE LOOKING to meet or chat to someone look no further **TEXT CHAT883 to 6525** for chat with pictures, fun and safe service.

MATURE Caribbean gent, seeks articulate female who likes music, dance and London lifestyle. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362491

VALENTINES card this year, no me neither, say hi and maybe you will get a late one. Paul 42. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362481

NICK 46, slim, genuine, seeks female, 36-56 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362447

RECENT widow 60, 5ft 9ins, medium build, N/S, seeks slim, attractive female to share the nice things in life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362291

MALE 52, seeks attractive, fun, outgoing female, 45-50 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 384770

ASHFORD lady sought by genuine, loyal male, likes music for fun times, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362249

FUN loving professional male, 42, independent, likes good things, seeks female for LTR. Don't mind animals/children. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 384750

MIDDLE aged male, 57, 5ft 9ins, likes football, gardening, seeks female, 55 plus. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362091

MALE 5ft 5ins, young 60's, dark hair, caring, likes travel, countryside, seeks slim-medium build, attractive soul mate for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362039

ATTRACTIVE lady, curvy and fun, looking for an uncomplicated fun only discreet relationship, after work etc., any area London. Discretion assured and expected please. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 356991

BABE seeks mature white male for discreet fun, you won't be sorry I know how to treat my man. Any area London. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 356997

64YR old female, 5ft 2ins, GSOH, likes golf, seeks male with GSOH for friendship, days out, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 339581

LONELY female, petite, attractive, size 8-10, blue eyes, long hair, likes historic places, holidays, meals out, seeks honest, genuine male for friendship initially. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 356359

TINKERBELLE seeks Peter Pan, 1m 36, 5ft 3ins, size 8-10 and am looking for a tall strong man who can connect and make me laugh. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 358721

CUDDLY curvy size 14 plus female looking for very assertive gent, 59-65 for daytime adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362725

BEDFORDSHIRE female, 39, HIV positive, likes cinema, music, travel, nights in, wine bars, seeks decent, white, professional male, under 45. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 358579

JOHN 42, 6ft, divorced, no ties, brown hair, blue eyes, likes cooking, camping, holidays, seeks female, 30-45 with similar interests for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361999

JOHN 52, 5ft 2ins, medium build, shaven head, blue eyes, seeks female of similar age with GSOH for fun times. St Helens. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362445

MALE 41, seeks slim, attractive, faithful, honest, dark female who likes cooking, walks, music, films etc for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 362315

DECENT looking male, 38, likes pubs, music, restaurants, nights in/out, seeks female, 20-40 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361771

LOVING genuine male, young at heart, 70, reliable, honest, likes cinema, meals out, seeks genuine, loving female for serious relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361875

BARRY 47, 6ft, well built, seeks female for dining and fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361787

TALL dark, professional male, seeks similar female, 32-44 for friendship, nights out and fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 384668

PAUL likes meals out, walks, seeks young female for relationship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361607

RICHARD 46, dark hair, blue eyes, 5ft 6ins, loving, caring, likes theatre, holidays, country walks, meals out, cinema, music, cooking, seeks female, 37-57 for loving LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361555

MICHAEL 68, retired historian, fit, active, intelligent, kind, seeks woman with lively mind and warm heart for LTR. North Kent. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361349

LEE 58, attractive, seeks black, attractive female 20-50 for fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361347

48YR old single male, seeks female for serious relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361327

TALL slim, fit, well dressed gent, late 70's, seeks slim, elegant lady for dining out and companionship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361463

ANDREW 5ft 10ins, easygoing, spontaneous, adventurous, seeks female for fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361445

STEVE 62, Mr Average, looking for a lady to have fun with and take care. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361931

GENT 62, assertive, many interests, seeks curvy lady, interested in exploring her secret fantasies. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361849

DECENT looking male, 38, likes pubs, music, restaurants, nights in/out, seeks female, 20-40 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361771

RICHARD 46, dark hair, 5ft 6ins, medium build, caring, loving, likes walks, cinema, meals out, DVDs, music, seeks female, 38-57 for loving relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 359801

32YR old male, outgoing, fun loving, seeks female for naughty fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 384356

WILLIAM young 65, fit, active, N/S, non drinker, seeks Christian female who enjoys the simple things in life. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 358033

KEV 47, 6ft 1ins, dark hair, brown eyes, seeks attractive, loving, loyal female. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 358761

HEDONISTIC curvy, vivacious female sought by successful, tall, young 51yr old guy to pamper and spoil. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 364264

ANDREW attractive, tanned, young 48, N/S, ex BA crew 747/concorde, fitness training instructor, mountain medic, GSOH, widowed, no kids/baggage, seeks anyone anywhere, genuine. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360965

61YR old male, loving, caring, likes motorsports, seeks female, 60-63 for meals out, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360919

MICHAEL 68, retired historian, fit, active, intelligent, kind, seeks woman with lively mind and warm heart for LTR. North Kent. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361349

DAVID 61, proud of it, fanciable, poetic, likes participation, disciplined, adventurous. Croydon. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 357791

ANDREW 59, seeks similar aged female for friendship and LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 357261

TOM 58, attractive, seeks black, attractive female 20-50 for fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361347

48YR old single male, seeks female for serious relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361327

WHITE male, 52, 6ft, medium build, likes meals out, cinema, travel, seeks genuine, kind, loving, black/mixed race female for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361259

STEVE 62, Mr Average, looking for a lady to have fun with and take care. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361931

GENT 62, assertive, many interests, seeks curvy lady, interested in exploring her secret fantasies. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361849

DECENT looking male, 38, likes pubs, music, restaurants, nights in/out, seeks female, 20-40 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361771

ENGLISH male, 60, N/S, likes days out, seeks black, Asian female, 60-65 for fun and friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361713

FRANK 80, seeks lady for companionship, meals out etc, feeling a little lonely like me? Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361559

MALE seeks female for daytime and adult fun/romance on a discreet basis. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361399

TALL slim, fit, N/S 52yr old guy, seeks likeminded female for no strings attached fun. Discretion assured and expected. London. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 384450

PROFESSIONAL male, 58, honest, reliable, fun, likes sports, travel, seeks attractive female for possible LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360777

BRIAN 48, 5ft 9ins, medium build, told attractive, easygoing, likes pubs, meals out, cinema, seeks attractive white female, 35-48 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361999

DAVID 61, proud of it, fanciable, poetic, likes participation, disciplined, adventurous. Croydon. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 357791

ANDREW 59, seeks similar aged female for friendship and LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 357261

MID 50's male, easygoing, likes normal things, seeks female to share life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 332397

BLOND male, 47, PA/secretary, easygoing, likes fashion, shopping, dancing, travel, seeks similar smart female who loves to chat and dance. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361011

DANNY 46, workaholic, seeks female for fun times, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 360085

47YR old male, easygoing, GSOH, likes nights out, meals, seeks female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 359753

CHRIS 5ft 7ins, sticky, fun loving, kind, seeks lady of my dreams, size 12-20. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 345962

YOUNG male, 33, new to area, seeks mature, adventurous female friend for fun evenings in. London. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 358063

RAMSGATE male, 5ft 5ins, young 60's, caring, likes travel, countryside, seeks slim-medium build, attractive soul mate for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 359471

MALE seeks female for daytime and adult fun/romance on a discreet basis. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361399

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INSIDE THIS WEEK

THE foundations of the London Array wind farm's first turbine were sunk into the Thames Estuary seabed this week, a landmark moment for the project.

When phase one is completed next year, the 175 turbines will provide enough energy to power two-thirds of Kent's homes.

With fossil fuels running low and costing more, it is encouraging to see the South East leading the way in renewable energy.



SIMON ROBINSON

BUSINESS EDITOR

TELEPHONE: 01303 817185

EMAIL: simon.robinson@kosmedia.co.uk

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Enterprise zone lobby urges Osborne to act

By **MARIJKE COX**

marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

EAST Kent could become one of Government's flagship enterprise zones to help fuel job growth and attract new businesses in the run up to Pfizer's closure.

In what would be a revival of a Thatcher-era scheme, 10 areas of the UK could be selected as specialist zones that would benefit from company tax breaks and lenient planning rules.

Councils may also be able to keep all business rates they raise in the zones. Chancellor George Osborne said the plan – costing £100 million over four years – would help attract new business and boost employment.

Kent County Council leader Cllr Paul Carter and South Thanet MP Laura Sandys are expected to put forward a case at Whitehall pushing for east Kent to be considered as one of the 10 zones, despite speculation that northern parts of the country are being targeted.

They will use Pfizer's departure from Sandwich in 2012 and the resulting 2,400 job losses to argue their case.

Flagship

During an adjournment debate in the House of Commons this week, Ms Sandys told science minister David Willetts that east Kent, stretching along the Manston corridor, should be looked upon as a potential for the scheme.

"We would like the Government to look on this area as one of the flagship enterprise zones," she said.

Mr Willetts said the Government was focusing on all the issues surrounding Pfizer's decision to leave the Sandwich site, including the possibility of the area becoming a specialist zone.

"There is much work to be done on the exact design – to what extent it is a matter of rate relief, liberalising the planning regime or other special tax reliefs," he said.

"Both the definition of the scope for enterprise



IN THE ZONE: Chancellor George Osborne

zones and the choice of the areas where those will be are important. I know that the case for this area of Kent will be made powerfully."

Under the Conservative Government during the mid-1980s to early 1990s, 38 zones were established – the most famous being the redevelopment of the Isle of Dogs in London's Docklands, now Canary Wharf – but many of these lapsed back into depression after only a

few years of success.

Mr Osborne argued the new zones would focus on areas of high growth, not just physical decline.

The move gives fresh hope to politicians fighting to save the east Kent economy and the thousands of Pfizer workers at risk of losing their jobs.

Ms Sandys, who has called on ministers to press Pfizer for more time before the redundancy process starts, said the area needed Government commitment for the long term.

"We have a once in a lifetime opportunity to turn our local economy around so that in years to come my colleagues and I can proudly state, 'Yes, our area is part of the South East economy'," she said.

During the same parliamentary debate, the issue of transport was also raised. Ms Sandys said the east Kent economy had been crying out for years for better transport links.

"The area is 70 miles for London, but can take two hours to reach by train," she said.

Upgrade

"The minister [Mr Willetts] experienced a very lengthy train journey of two-and-a-half hours because of both a slow train and works on the line, so he knows that, per mile, Sandwich to London is one of the slowest routes in the country.

"I therefore ask for the Government's support for our bid to get the rail line from London to Thanet upgraded so that we can get to Thanet within the hour.

"That would revolutionise our local economy."

Mr Willetts admitted he had experienced a "painfully slow" journey on a recent visit to Sandwich and said there were some transport challenges.

He said Government would consider calls for an improved rail service between Thanet and London as well as a new station on the line.

He also touched on the significance of Manston airport to the economy.

Ms Sandys added that following Pfizer's decision to leave Sandwich, it was vital for Government to help secure investment and encourage new business start-ups on the site.

Still best placed to beat the downturn

ASHFORD business bosses say the town is booming thanks to substantial investment from both the private and public sectors.

Since the turn of the year a number of multi-million-pound companies have moved into the market town, while existing firms have also expanded. National retail giant Dobbies led the way by opening an £8 million 48,000 sq ft store at the fast-expanding Eureka Park. The move created 120 jobs.

Eureka's developers, Quadrant Estates, are now building a new phase of offices at the site, alongside junction nine of the M20.

Tesco and Sainsbury's are also preparing to invest heavily in expanding their supermarkets in the town.

Tesco will create an extra 75 jobs if it receives

the go-ahead to increase its Park Farm store from 40,000 sq ft to 55,000 sq ft, while Sainsbury's will create 350 full- and part-time jobs if it is allowed to double the size of its store at the Warren Retail Park.

Meanwhile SuperCups Vending has just cut the ribbon on a new headquarters, showroom, warehouse and distribution centre, giving it four times as much space.

The firm, which began in a garage in the town, now employs 42 people and is looking to grow its workforce further.

Ashford's Future managing director Judith Armit, pictured right, said: "Ashford continues to demonstrate we are the best place to do business. Ashford's attractiveness as a busi-

ness location is boosted by excellent road and rail links, making it one of the most accessible towns. It is reassuring to see more companies are being encouraged to expand or move into the area."

Ashford Borough Council leader Cllr Peter Wood said: "It is extremely encouraging to see many companies investing in Ashford and creating employment opportunities for the town."

"There has been significant public sector investment on infrastructure in recent years and the arrival of high-speed rail services. We are now seeing the private sector show their confidence in the town by moving to or expanding their operations here."



Comment

THE unrelenting rise of reality TV has seen an uncomfortable shift in the public's notion of celebrity. Where once it was widely accepted that genuine talent, dedication, sacrifice and hard work was needed to reach the top, now anyone can seemingly make it into the soulless and vacuous pages of the glossy magazines.

We thought we had it bad when all the boys at school wanted to be David Beckham and all the girls wanted to be Jordan. Now thousands of youngsters across the country have their hearts set on being the next Jedward or Cheeky Girls.

And why? For the perceived financial wealth that comes with fame. These bling-obsessed teens don't want to be teachers or nurses, plumbers or painters.

They want to be mega-rich pop stars, with all the associated trappings: a 20-bedroom mansion, a fleet of luxury cars, a miniature dog in a handbag and a vat of fake tan.

But perhaps not for much longer.

Chancellor George Osborne's Project Merlin has brought a new type of mega-rich superstar to the fore – the bankers.

The agreement between the Government and the UK's four biggest banks will disclose bonuses paid out to their top earners. Barclays' new chief executive Bob Diamond received a £6.5 million bonus for 2010. That's on top of his £250,000 salary.

And if Diamond hits future targets, his 2010 pay package could top £9m.

RBS and Lloyds, both of which were saved from going under by huge Government bail-outs, also handed out bumper bonuses to their bosses.

RBS chief Stephen Hester received £2m, while Lloyds counterpart Eric Daniels was given £1.45m.

So that's a £9m bonus if you head up a profitable bank, and £1.45 million if you don't. Not bad either way.

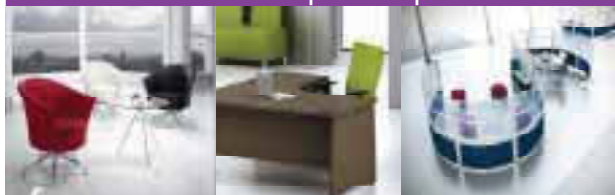
Expect to see Diamond, Hester and Daniels alongside the likes of Hollywood A-listers and Premier League footballers in the pages of the glossy magazines soon.

And kids everywhere saying: "When I grow up I want to become a hedge-fund manager for an irresponsible, Government-funded banking corporation."

Business Editor SIMON ROBINSON
Twitter: @KOSbusiness



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Slice of overseas cheese action



CANTERBURY Cheesemakers are working seven days a week to keep up with export demand.

Dairy producers say a boom in tourism combined with the weak pound has seen an increase in overseas sales – with goods packed off as far afield as China, Hong Kong, Mexico and the USA.

Jane Bowyer (pictured left), maker of the award-winning Ashmore cheeses at Dargate, has just packed wheels of four different cheeses for an artisanal baker's shop in Kuala Lumpur.

The owner saw the cheeses at the firm's counter at the Goods Shed in Canterbury, visited the dairy and now plans to feature them in his sandwiches.

Meanwhile, the Belgian town of Grez-Doiceau, near Waterloo, hopes to feature them in a food fair as part of its St George's Day festivities.

Ms Bowyer said: "We have had such a good start to the year we now have to make cheese on Sundays and have had to take on two new staff in the last couple of months to keep up with demand."

Offshore wind farm work is under way

WORK has begun on building the London Array offshore wind farm.

The first of the 177 foundations, each weighing 268 tonnes – the equivalent of 35 double-decker buses – was sunk into the Thames Estuary on Tuesday.

Once phase one of the wind farm is completed next year, 175 turbines will generate enough electricity to power 480,000 homes per year.

Tuesday's milestone was hailed by the energy firm behind the London Array project.

Anders Eldrup, chief executive of DONG Energy, said: "This is a significant milestone for London Array – off the shore and into the water."

"Soon we'll be seeing turbines going up and the wind farm starting to generate low-carbon electricity."

Dr Frank Mastiaux, chief executive of E.ON climate and renewables, said: "Installing the first foundation on schedule marks another major step in the construction of the world's largest offshore wind farm."

"It's a great moment for the team now all the detailed planning and preparation over years can finally be seen out in the water."

Dr Sultan Al Jaber, chief executive of Abu Dhabi-based joint partner



GENERATION NEXT: London Array's Cleve Hill substation, near Graveney

Masdar, said: "The installation of the first foundation demonstrates the commitment and desire to make London Array a reality, and is testament to the industry-leading resources and experience exemplified by this strategic partnership. Masdar is proud to be at the heart of this ambitious effort."

Each foundation consists of a tubular steel monopile, driven 20 to 50 metres into the seabed, and a large yellow transition piece, which is fixed

over the top of the monopile to provide the base for the turbine.

The monopiles are between 33 and 65 metres long and weigh between 200 and 650 tonnes, while the transition pieces are between 20 to 28-metres high and weigh between 245 to 345 tonnes.

London Array is being built about 20km off the north Kent coast.

If approved, the second phase will add enough capacity to bring the total to 1,000MW.

Winning a share of the spoilers

NEARLY 50 jobs have been created in Kent thanks to the launch of the new Range Rover Evoque.

Magna International, which has a base in Hartlip, near Sittingbourne, won the contract to supply bumpers, sills, rear spoilers, interior doors and rear quarter-panels.

The £400-million deal will see 46 jobs created at Hartlip and a further 90 at the firm's Merseyside base.

In total, Range Rover awarded more than £2 billion of contracts to UK companies.

Jaguar Land Rover's director of purchasing, Ian Harnett, said: "The UK's automotive supply base is truly



NEW MODEL: Range Rover Evoque world class. We demand the highest standards from suppliers.

"We focus on many aspects of supplier capability, including technology, quality, materials, environmental performance, efficiency and cost. It is testament to the excellence of compa-

nies and employees that 50 per cent of our component business is within the UK.

"The Evoque is a brand new model, so every vehicle we build is incremental volume for us and our suppliers, which is also good news for employment across the industry."

Business secretary Vince Cable also welcomed the deals. During a tour of the Merseyside factory, he said: "Jaguar Land Rover's £2 billion of contracts to businesses in the UK to supply components shows the automotive supply chain is capable of winning major contracts and creating jobs."

THE University for the Creative Arts has launched a new consultancy service offering businesses expert advice on a wide range of industries.



The Edge scheme also includes in-house training and access to the university's state-of-the-art technical facilities.

UCA research and enterprise assistant director Uwe Derksen, pictured left, said: "We have a huge pool of highly qualified and very talented people at UCA who have a great deal to offer outside of our five campuses."

For more information, visit www.ucaedge.com.

CREATIVE agency Dandelion was the UK's sole winner at a global brand repositioning awards.

The small Smeeth-based firm picked up a Rebrand 100 trophy in recognition of their work with pharmaceutical company Martindale Pharma.

Managing director Steve Howard said: "We are absolutely delighted to have won this award. It just goes to show that with the right attitude towards branding, a small agency outside of London can still be recognised on a global scale."

"We aim to give our clients the best possible service, without the London price tag, and the fact that we are the only UK agency this year to win the award, just underlines what we always believed was possible."

SHEPHERD Neame has received a silver award in the Green Tourism Business Scheme.

The Faversham brewery was given the award after proving to be actively engaged in reducing the negative environmental and social impacts of its tourism operations.

Sheps' visitor centre manager Graham Hukins said: "We are very pleased to have received this award, which recognises the sustainable practices we have in place for the benefit of the environment, the community, visitors and the company."

"It fits in other local initiatives such as the Faversham Walks and Food and Drink Trails that Shepherd Neame supports."

SOCIAL care provider Avante Partnership held its inaugural Stars Awards night to recognise committed staff who had contributed to the organisation's success.

The partnership – which includes Avante Care and Support, Avante Community Support and Stepahead Support – was established in 1990 and is now one of the largest care providers in the South East and London.

Chief executive Cedric Fredrick said: "I felt it only seemed right that staff – past and present – should be saluted and recognised as an Avante Star, and what better way to do this than to have an awards night? From this the Stars Awards was born for a night to remember."

SMALL and medium-sized firms are being advised to get their book-keeping in order, on the eve of a Customs clampdown.

The warning was issued by TaxAssist Accountants, based in Larkfield, and comes after HMRC announced its Business Records Check campaign.

The company's Gary Richards said: "Keeping up to date with book-keeping can be a big administrative job that often becomes a burden to small businesses."

"However, keeping on top of records can lead to better management of your business and its cashflow. Plus, HMRC is less likely to take further action if your records are found to be satisfactory."

Partners' bonus spreads wealth

JOHN Lewis workers will receive an 18 per cent bonus after the group posted a 10 per cent rise in profits, *writes Simon Robinson.*

The bumper pay day will go to all of John Lewis Partnership's 76,500 full-time workers, including those at the Bluewater (1,317) and Tunbridge Wells (238) branches.

The PLC – which includes 32 John Lewis stores and 244 Waitrose supermarkets – saw profits to January 29, this year, rise £41.3 million to £431m.

Under a £194.5m Partnership Bonus deal each full-time employee, from shop assistants through to the chief executive, will be rewarded with a one-off payment equivalent to 18 per cent of their salary.

Improving

John Lewis Partnership chairman Charlie Mayfield paid tribute to the employees, known as partners, for their hard work.

He said: "Our partners have shown their commitment to continually improving what we do every day."

"The profits we make go to partners and to improving the business. I'm delighted that we've announced partners will receive a bonus of 18 per cent – an average of more than nine weeks' pay."

"In addition, we have paid £267m into our pension fund in the last year. Looking to the future, while we expect more difficult conditions for much of the year, we are confident of our plans. We will invest £600m this year and expect to create 4,300 new jobs."

One area that has already benefited from

investment is Tunbridge Wells, with the west Kent town's John Lewis at home store opening in November, 2010.

Branch manager Gabby Armstrong said: "The shop opened with a 90 per cent majority of new partners, with the total partners working here 220."

"Since opening, we experienced a buoyant Christmas and clearance period, where the team reacted fabulously to the high demand, offering an exceptional level of service – a great achievement for all our partners."

"Bonus day for us is a new and exciting experience. This will be the first time many reap the rewards of being a partner in John Lewis. It's our business and we should all feel proud of our achievements."

"I'm very proud of the team's achievement here. They are amazing, so bonus day is our time to celebrate."

John Lewis Bluewater managing director Karen Lord said: "We underwent a major refurbishment in 2009, introducing a fourth trading floor featuring one of only two food halls in the division's portfolio and a new kitchenware department."

"The success of this led to the branch finishing the full trading year at plus-12 per cent. This was a record year's trade for us and a result our partners are proud of."

"The food hall continues to get positive feedback from customers. We are looking forward to another exciting year and our partners are committed to continuing to give great service."

John Lewis saw operating profit rise 22.2 per cent to £201.2m, while Waitrose profits went up three per cent, £8.1m to £274.9m.



COUNT US IN: John Lewis partners celebrate bonus at Bluewater

Berth of profits boost

HIGHWAY Marine has gone high-tech in a bid to boost profits.

The Sandwich-based firm has enlisted the services of The Waypoint, which enables boat owners to book berths over the internet or via smartphone.

The online booking facility, launched at last month's London Boat Show, helps marinas maximise revenue on empty berths by advertising them on a central database.

Sailors can log in and immediately search and book a berth in their marina of choice with just a click of a button.

Highway Marine's mooring manager, James Blackmore, said: "We wanted to gain web presence for our berths and The Waypoint is a great platform to achieve this without having to invest heavily in new technology

or web advertising. We are looking forward to seeing the benefits of using it over the coming months and the ease with which sailors will be able to book berths with us."

The Waypoint co-founder Charles Bacon said: "Being web-based, we benefit from a number of advantages over the typical database or office whiteboard."

"By updating vacancies online, the whole boating world can now find out about berths. Also, because it's free for marinas to sign up for the first year, there's nothing to risk and everything to gain. A number of marinas have already signed up and we are delighted to welcome Highway on board."

Highway Marine has been providing services to sailors and boat owners since the 1970s.



VISIONARY: Turner Contemporary gallery

Seeing the light during preview

TOURISM-based businesspeople have been given a sneak preview of the Turner Contemporary gallery in Margate.

More than 150 hairdressers, hoteliers, taxi drivers and restaurateurs were treated to a tour of the attraction, which opens next month.

Margate Renewal Partnership director Derek Harding said the gallery would have a positive impact on Thanet and beyond.

"It was fantastic to see so many people," he said. "This is going to be a huge boost for Margate and the whole area. We want to involve key local businesses to show them the benefits Turner Contemporary will bring."

"I think it's fair to say a number of people came along thinking one thing but left with a completely different view."

Taxi driver Hugh Brown said: "I've really changed my opinion. Turner Contemporary shouldn't be seen in isolation, but as part of a concept which will help the area."

"I haven't had much to do with art in the past. I thought I wouldn't understand it, but I didn't realise how beautiful some of Turner's works are and I'm quite impressed."

South Lodge Guest House owners Bill and Christa Hackney said: "It will do well for the area, the building is very impressive, iconic even, from the outside, but is even more impressive inside."



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Flat-out to end eyesore



DIGGING IN: Rod Clark, with Mike Flannery, on site in Dover

THE Marpaul Group is carrying out work on a Dover development thanks to a £1.1 million NatWest Bank loan.

The Hadlow-based property developers are using the cash to turn a fire-damaged building, in Park Avenue, into 11 flats.

The project has started to take shape and will be finished by this summer.

Marpaul's managing director, Rod Clark, said: "Marpaul is a diverse business and one we are proud to say is doing extremely well in these challenging times.

"The site at Dover was an eyesore and local residents are delighted we are in the process of turning this into an attractive residential development.

Some flats will boast views of Dover Castle and will be finished to our usual high standard."

The firm has now received

NatWest funding on two projects in the last 18 months, having turned to the bank for a Hadlow farm buildings project in 2009.

Marpaul turned the Grove Farm property into student accommodation, providing 55 en-suite rooms for Hadlow College, which is just three miles away.

NatWest's Mike Flannery, who oversaw both deals, said: "Marpaul is a long-standing customer and we were delighted to be able to structure the appropriate funding for the Dover development.

"Rod has a proven track record in this field. Over the last 10 years Marpaul has completed many prestigious projects in London and the Home Counties, working with a variety of customers in the education and healthcare sectors.

"I wish him well with the Dover development and look forward to seeing the end result."

Career U-turn
rediscover his

KOSmedia BUSINESS WEEK

THE BIG INTERVIEW

Farm estate manager Oliver Doubleday made the decision to take a career U-turn while out driving in the Kent countryside. The father-of-three chose not to pursue his work as a molecular biologist and returned to Bax Farmhouse at Tonge, near Sittingbourne, to continue the business' 150-year association with his family. Mr Doubleday keeps his eye in through the East Malling Research facility and believes further food science has a big part to play in the future.

He spoke to Business Week editor Simon Robinson



Oliver Doubleday

OLIVER Doubleday says he is the man with the oil can. The 59-year-old explains that his job on his family's Sittingbourne estate is to keep things running and the wheels turning.

"I really like people to get on and I really want to facilitate that," he said. "In some ways I see myself as the guy who's there to keep an eye on things and if I see something that needs oil, then I will oil it.

"I'm not hands-on in the sense of rolling up my sleeves and driving tractors. I'm hands-on in the fact that I'm about and I'm busy, and I'm talking to people and encouraging them, trying to make it happen.

"The Brazilians have a saying that translates as, 'The farmer's eye fattens the bullock', and the English equivalent is, 'The farmer's boot is the best fertiliser'.

"It means there's nothing better than getting out and looking and seeing and mixing it up. By the same token, I try not to interfere because I've got really good people who are doing well and I don't want to introduce confusion by getting in their way."

As managing director of GH Dean and Co Ltd, Doubleday oversees the family firm's vast estate, which consists of more than 1,100 hectares of arable, 2,500 ewes and 140 hectares of fruit – apples, pears and cherries.

He began working on the farms in 1981 but it was not a given that he would continue the long father-to-son lineage.

Pointing to family portraits hung side-by-side in his unassuming Bax Farmhouse office, Doubleday explained: "I'm the son, grandson and great grandson of farmers. My family has been in farming here for more than 150 years.

"But I was trained as a molecular biologist and carried out post-doctoral research in Belgium, Holland then

briefly in the US before coming back here.

"The turning point came for me when I was driving through Kent on a beautiful spring day.

"At the time I was not unsuccessful as a biologist, but I was working very long hours and could see people like me getting divorced.

"I thought to myself, 'Do you want to end up as a professor in Paris filling in forms and funding applications? Where's the quality of life? So I decided to come back to the farm.'

The father-of-three has fused his family's business with his scientific background, taking an interest in research and development of the farming industry.

His interest has seen Doubleday take up the position of chairman at East Malling Research (EMR), the UK's principal provider of horticultural research and development.

"I had been very serious about science and I still really enjoy it, so it's great to be the chairman of EMR. I'm there to support and offer guidance, so I'm closely involved with it and get to know about what's happening.

"There's a whole range of fantastic work being done. A member of the team's recent project saw him undertake the sequencing of the strawberry genome – that's fun.

"I'm immensely proud of what EMR has achieved and quite passionate in my belief that we have to reinvest in research facilities.

"People think it's a cover for GM [genetically modified], but that's not the main game in town. There has been a clear warning on the 'perfect storm' we will soon face in terms of climate change and the need for more

food, water and energy. This needs to be addressed by good science.

"It is going to be important in future to produce food with fewer resources, less water and lower environmental impact. There is a perception that farming is getting worse in terms of pesticides and GM foods but this is just not true. We are doing it so much better now."



KENTISH ROOTS: Oliver Doubleday's family has been farming in county for 150 years

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INFLUENCE: With former Labour minister Hilary Benn

Doubleday says scientific research, coupled with huge advances in farming machinery and technology, had transformed the industry in a single generation.

"I'm producing three to four times more than my father used to produce and the fruit is better quality. We understand what we're doing a bit better, the fruit is hanging better on our trees and we can produce more and at a better quality – something that is genuinely necessary.

"Our customers want the fruit to be absolutely first class. In the past, quality was less of an issue as fruit was in short supply and had to be locally sourced.

"But the rate of change in the past generation has been astonishing and the one certainty for the future is uncertainty. If you look at the past and see how rapidly things have evolved, the one good bet is it's not going to stop, things will get more and more sophisticated."

The farmer, who sells his produce to the leading supermarkets, said he was pleased to see a recent resurgence in shoppers buying English, seasonal fruit.

"The UK is deficient in horticultural production – salads and veg, and apples and pears," he said.

"But our strawberries have been a great success. These growers have done an excellent job and have managed to displace imports. They have increased the season and produced really high-quality products and people have recognised that.

"I would rather our fruit was locally sourced. Often imported goods have been on long journeys and whoever bred it did it in a way more for its ability to stand up to long journeys than to give it a nice taste.

"I went to the Taste of Kent Awards and was surprised by the enthusiasm of the people and amount of buzz in the room.

"Clearly from the number of entrants it's obvious that we've got a vibrant sector in the county and people who are dedicated to providing really good food and drink. It's great.

"I'm a little part of that. We think we grow a pretty mean apple and a really nice cherry. I welcome locally produced. I think it's responsible. People should care about the quality of their food."

LIKE the Taste of Kent award nominees, Doubleday is more concerned about the quality of his products than making huge profits.

He said: "Our turnover is about £3 million, not as high as it would be if we were selling packed fruit."

Which begs the question; why don't you pack your fruit rather than pay someone else to do it for you?

"I think it's very important in life to decide not only what you do but also what you're not going to do," he said.

"I'm very clear that I'm quite busy enough with what I do at the moment and I'm not looking to do more things. I'm quite happy if I can find good people to do more things for me but that's another matter.

"Above all else we have to be excellent. If you're not in the top quartile in farming you're probably not making any profit.

"Certainly if you're not in the top half you're not making profit. I aim to be at the very, very top, which we are able to be with our arable produce.

"This is not because I'm particularly clever but we are blessed in Kent with good soil and climate. Our wheat yield is probably 20 per cent above UK average. If I was getting the average I would not be profitable and if I was at the lower end of the average I would be losing money.

"So it's very important to be very good at what you do. It's a very competitive market and I'm not just talking about my neighbour – it's a global market.

"Price pressures and these things are very acute – it's not an easy job."



GOLDEN GLOW: GH Dean and Co's estate includes 140 hectares of fruit



OLIVER DOUBLEDAY CV

- Managing director of family's estate: 1,150 hectares of arable, 590 hectares of grass for 2,500 ewes, 140 hectares of fruit
- Working on the farms since 1981
- Involved in the management of an 85-hectare rubber plantation, owned by wife, Maria, in São Paulo, Brazil
- Trustee of the Brogdale Horticultural Trust
- Chairman of East Malling Research, since 2006
- Local director for Kent of the NFU Mutual, since 2005

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Eyes on the prize for IoD's shortlisted trio

By **SIMON ROBINSON**

simon.robinson@kosmedia.co.uk

THREE Kent business bosses have been shortlisted for an Institute of Directors' prize.

The efforts of Kevin Kneebone, Nicky Pearson and Steve Martin have all been recognised ahead by the IoD's London and South East Director of the Year awards.

The trio will learn their fate at a gala dinner in London on Tuesday, March 22.

Kneebone, managing director at landmine clearance firm BACTEC International has been nominated in the international business up to £24.99 million category.

During his eight years with the Rochester-based business he has moved control of the company to a board of directors but also found the time to get his hands dirty in the field.

"I like to lead from the front and set an example," he said. "Recently I was in the middle of the Baltic Sea working on a project disposing of unexploded ordnance with leading edge in-house technology developed by BACTEC. I'll shortly be heading off to the Middle East to do the same."

Pearson founded The Beauty Works in Dartford in 1993. The managing director has



ALL SMILES: Steve Martin and (inset) Kevin Kneebone have been shortlisted

been shortlisted in the £5m to £24.99m category. The company designs and commissions the manufacture of consumer health, fitness and electrical beauty products and clients include Tesco, Asda, Next, Sainsbury's, Wilkinsons, Aldi and New Look.

Having survived the 2008 collapse of another major client, Woolworths, the company now boasts a turnover of £5 million and 10 staff.

"We believe we can do anything any of our clients ask of us," said Pearson. "There is no hierarchy here, everyone contributes with

ideas and we are constantly moving forward. As a result we can move and respond much quicker than our bigger competitors."

Martin is in the running for Director of the Year for companies with a turnover of up to £4.99m.

He founded Xmo Strata in 2002 and has grown it into one of the UK's leading sign installation and maintenance companies, with clients including BP, Shell, Esso and Chevron.

True to his desire to establish the safest and best-quality service provider in the field, he has refused to cut back on staff training and development during the recession and encourages his teams to take the lead.

He said: "I like my staff to give me solutions. I couldn't fit a sign in a million years so if we are looking at a new procedure I'll get four or five people together and we'll try it, take suggestions, try it again and agree the best way."

The IoD awards are sponsored by PricewaterhouseCoopers.

The firm's South East regional leader, John Minards, said: "This year we received a record number of entries and the calibre of the nominations was incredibly high."

"All the finalists have demonstrated best in class performance and we would like to congratulate them on reaching this stage."



NICKY PEARSON:
Founded The Beauty Works

unique business solutions



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Firm's Ideal opportunity



JOIN THE TEAM: Ideal Waste Paper Co's move into Kent has created 60 jobs

A PURPOSE-built recycling depot has opened in Swanley, creating 60 jobs.

The Ideal Waste Paper Co has invested £14 million in the ultra-modern depot, which will also serve as the firm's new headquarters.

Managing director Kenny Thew said: "We have planned for years to relocate to premises where we can expand our business."

"Our new Kent facility, near the M25, will offer local authorities and major account-holders significant benefits for recycling across the south."

"We are committed to the development of a sustainable environment and actively encourage industry to exploit the potential for recycling."

Kent County Council's deputy leader, Cllr Alex King, said he was pleased the firm had chosen to move into the county.

"We are delighted Ideal Waste Paper has decided to invest in our county and help our local authorities progress with their recycling commitments."



IMPRESSIVE: New depot at Swanley

Locate in Kent chief executive Paul Wookey said: "It's exciting that Ideal Waste Paper chose Kent for its impressive facilities."

"We're pleased to have been able to assist the company by introducing it to Kent-based businesses, which will continue to provide support."

Sparkling jewel in port's crown

By **SIMON ROBINSON**

simon.robinson@kosmedia.co.uk

AN ELEGANT seafront hotel is set to reopen after being restored to its original Regency splendour.

The 81-bedroom Best Western Dover Marina Hotel and Spa has undergone a multi-million-pound renovation and now boasts three conference rooms, a restaurant and bar, seafront coffee shop and ice cream parlour and a fitness and spa centre.

The hotel, which takes up a large mid-section of the five-storey Grade II-listed Waterloo Crescent terrace, is being run by Leaf Hotels, which operates two other hotels in east Kent.

Sixty jobs have been created at their latest hotel.

Leaf Hotels general manager David Otteson said he was delighted with the results of the six-month restoration project.

"The hotel is the jewel in Dover's crown, with breathtaking views across the beach and the harbour to the Channel and beyond to France," he said.

"Thanks to its fusion of 21st-century comfort and 19th-century styling, the hotel is full of character and charm. With excellent access to ferry and cruise terminals, it's ideal for business and leisure.

"This is a wonderful place to stay, an ideal base to enjoy the delights of Kent, or a day trip to France and Belgium."

The hotel boss also praised the quality of the refurbishment work undertaken by award-winning interior design practice Nicholas Hollinshead Interiors.

He said: "The brief was to blend the original 1830s features with modern-day facilities and



FINE DINING: The refurbished restaurant

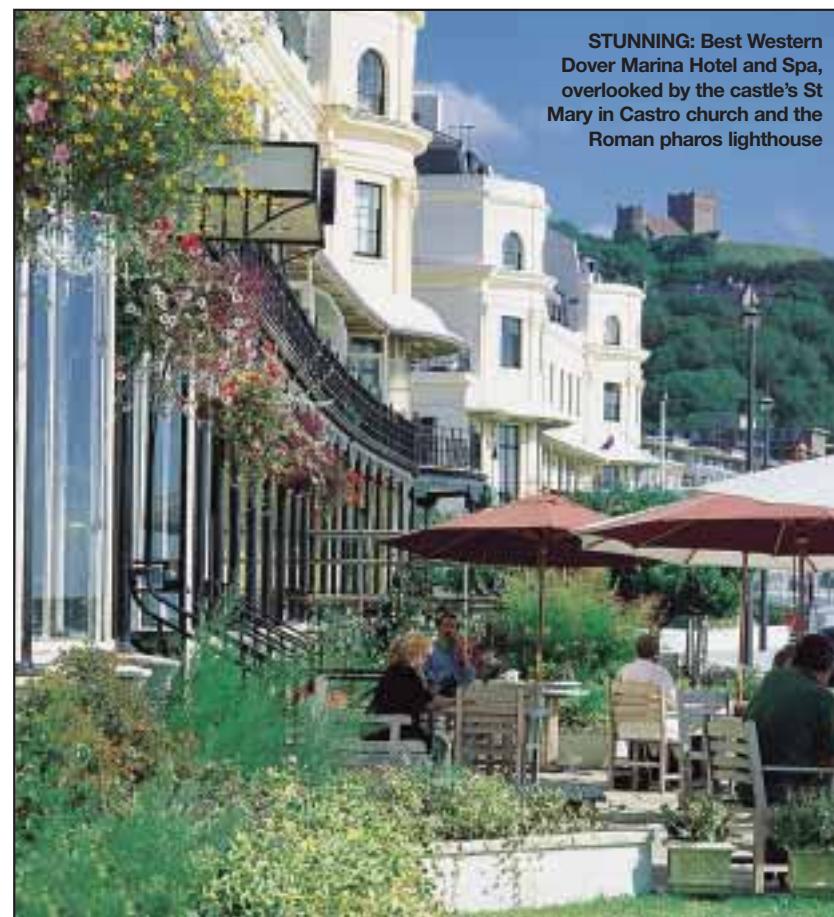
the result is stunning. Wallpapers, carpets and furniture have been sourced from all over the world to make this one of the most stylish hotels in Kent. We are all thrilled with the outcome."

Tourism champion Visit Kent's chief executive, Sandra Matthews-Marsh, said the hotel will be a boost to the county's tourism industry. "They are to be congratulated for having the vision, dedication and commitment to deliver such an exciting project," she said.

"The hotel is a welcome addition to the hospitality sector. The county needs additional high-quality bed stock and the Best Western Dover Marina Hotel and Spa offers just that."

The hotel, formerly known as the Churchill, caters for weddings, meetings and conferences, plus theme nights, fine dining parties and private dining.

It will be officially reopened on Thursday, March 24.



STUNNING: Best Western Dover Marina Hotel and Spa, overlooked by the castle's St Mary in Castro church and the Roman pharos lighthouse



Towering success at castle

LEEDS Castle's newly-restored private function wing has proven a huge success – with wedding bookings alone at a four-year high.

The historic castle's Maiden's Tower has been converted into a multi-purpose conference facility and also boasts five bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms.

The Tower, which played host to movie-star parties in the 1920s and '30s and was the setting for secret political discussions during World War Two, was reopened in its current guise in October, last year.

Leeds Castle's hospitality business manager Debbie Matthews said feedback had been overwhelmingly positive.

"It's going really well," she said. "The facilities have been well received. The Tower appeals to different markets. Wedding bookings are buoyant – the highest in four years – but corporate bookings have also been high thanks to the two flexible support rooms we can offer."

"The great thing is that we're yet to see just how fantastic the Maiden's Tower can be. Once the summer comes we can get the most out of the private garden. We're really pleased

with the response."

Built in the early 12th century to replace the earlier Saxon manor of Esledes, Leeds Castle was later home to a succession of kings and queens.

Perhaps its most famous owner was Henry VIII, who spent lavishly to transform the castle from a rugged fortress into a royal palace and was responsible for much of its splendour.

He ordered the construction of the Maiden's Tower in about 1544 in preparation for the visit of his first queen, Catherine of Aragon, to house the royal maids of honour.

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NEXT WEEK: Business Week Spotlight on Business Fleet

Team close in on driver

Motorbase set to announce third signing as new season looms

By STEVE TERVET

MOTORBASE Performance are edging closer to completing their 2011 driver line-up with the opening round of the new season now less than a month away.

The Wrotham-based team are on the verge of announcing their third driver for the British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) and have confirmed two more names for their assault on the Porsche Carrera Cup GB.

George Richardson, the most improved driver of 2010, will step up to compete in the pro-am1 category of the Carrera Cup after a storming end to last season, when he picked up four consecutive pro-am2 victories.

Accident

The 19-year-old will be joined on the team by Steve Parish, the Crystal Palace co-chairman, who is looking to complete a full season for the first time since starting racing in 2009.

An accident at Oulton Park curtailed Parish's efforts last season, but he showed enough pace in the pro-am2 class to remain with Motorbase for a second campaign.

"Both guys have come through the ranks with us," said Motorbase owner David Bartrum. "Steve came to us wanting to get the correct licence for the Carrera Cup and we spent 2008/09 with him to get him racing cars.

"It's a natural progression for Steve to race in the Carrera Cup and he's the co-chairman of my club, Crystal Palace, so I've got to keep him happy.

"George is another of our key drivers, who



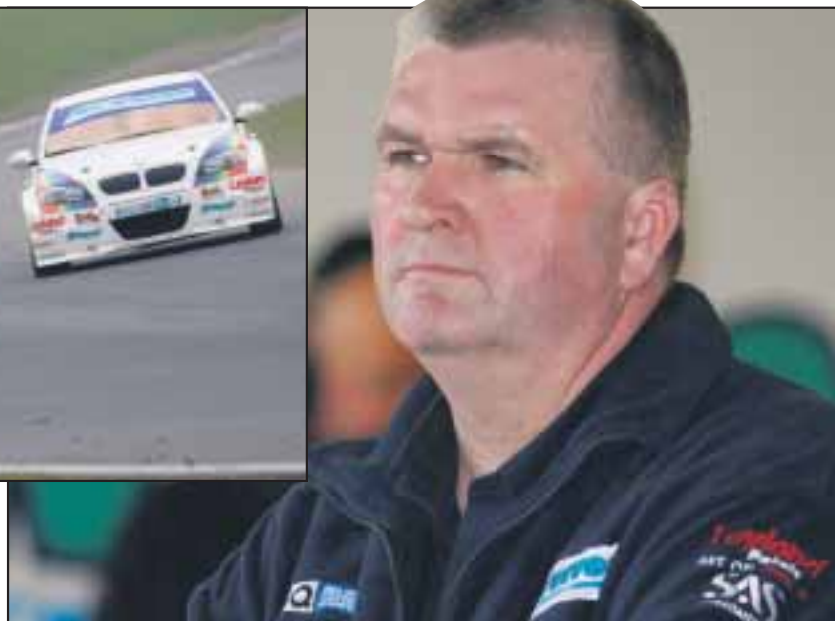
DEAL IMMINENT: David Bartrum (right) is close to announcing his third driver as Motorbase Performance gear up for the new British Touring Car Championship

started off in Ginettas. We had him in a cup car at the end of 2008, when he was just 16.

"He didn't do the full season in 2009, he just did the one round, but he came back in 2010 for his first full season and did extremely well."

The Carrera Cup will again run in support of the BTCC, with both championships getting under way at Brands Hatch on the weekend of April 2.

With Mat Jackson and Liam Griffin already signed up to represent Motorbase in the



Picture: NICK DUNGAN

BTCC, Bartrum said a deal to secure their third driver was imminent.

"Like everything, it comes down to commerce, timing and finance," he said. "At the moment, we're still working away, but I think we've got a good chance in both championships.

"I'm pleased with the drivers we've managed to secure, with Michael Caine and Tim Harvey in the Carrera Cup and Mat Jackson and Liam Griffin in BTCC. Liam has been

excelling in everything so far, much more so than we thought.

"He didn't get on with the Carrera Cup car, it's a difficult car and he always said he'd be far better in a front-wheel drive car. He's got the ability to do well in touring cars."

Richardson and Parish will begin testing their Porsche 911 GT3 cars on Sunday, before the official pre-season test takes place at Snetterton on March 22.

Hectic schedule taking toll on young runners

THERE were a mixed set of results for Tonbridge Athletic Club's top runners when they competed at the UK Inter-Counties Cross Country Championships last weekend.

Andy Combs was the club's only medallist representing Kent, finishing 31st as the youngest runner in the senior men's race to help the team win bronze at Cofton Park in Birmingham.

Grace Nicholls went home empty handed in the senior women's race, but nonetheless made an encouraging return to form by finishing 13th.

There were also team medals for two members running for Surrey. Ruth Bourne's 13th place helped win team gold in the under-15 girls, while Henry Pearce earned a bronze in the under-17 men by finishing 14th.

Mark Hookway, Tonbridge's winter team manager, felt the long cross-country season was beginning to take its toll on some of the club's young talents.

He said: "It was a bit of a mixed bag and I think a few are suffering from end of season-itis.

"In the past we've found as a club we haven't done well before Christmas and pushed on afterwards. This winter we had a really good autumn, but you can't expect them to perform at that level all the way through."

With the national schools championship next week in mind, Tonbridge are likely to send second string teams to compete at the inau-



Picture: TONBRIDGE AC

SOLE MEDALLIST: Andy Combs

gural South of England Cross Country Championships on Saturday.

Elsewhere, Tadgh Healy won the under-17 Indoor Combined Events Championships in Sheffield. The teenager came from behind to win the title by just two points, finishing with a score of 4,729.

Gilliat-Smith's goals firing Sevenoaks to the top flight

PROMOTION to hockey's Premier Division is almost within reach for Sevenoaks ladies as they look to extend their long unbeaten run this weekend.

Three points clear at the top of Conference East with three games remaining, Oaks are edging towards the league title which so painfully eluded them last season.

Pipped to top spot on goal-difference by Ipswich last term, Sevenoaks now have control of their own destiny as they prepare to host Old Loughtonians on Saturday.

Cathy Gilliat-Smith has contributed 10 goals to the cause so far and the former Great Britain forward has urged her Oaks teammates to maintain their focus over the run-in.

"I think we just have to be really professional in our attention to detail," she said. "We can't start thinking about the end of the season because there are still three games to go, there's everything to play for and other teams are in with a shout of catching us.

"We can't get complacent, we've got to try not to get frustrated, but we've played some really good hockey in the second-half of the season and I think we want to do that all the time."

Upon resuming outdoor action after the winter break, Sevenoaks won three games on the spin, including crucial victories away to



Picture: NICK DUNGAN

GOAL-DEN GIRL: Cathy Gilliat-Smith has scored 10 times this season

promotion rivals Ipswich and Surbiton.

Their momentum was somewhat slowed over the next two weekends as Chelmsford and Horsham held them to 1-1 draws, but Gilliat-Smith, who has experience of having played Premier Division hockey with Canterbury, remains confident in Oaks' ability to finish the job.

The 29-year-old said: "I think we've consolidated, I've got used to playing with the girls and we know each other, what to expect from each

other. We keep pushing each other and we've grown together over the last year. We've added a couple of players, Lily Elliott, who's only 16, and Heather Batten, so they've brought a little bit extra.

"The indoor competition [in January] was very good, we were tight as a group and we travelled to Lilleshall so we spent a lot of time together. We played against some Premier sides and that gave us more belief that we are good enough to be there or thereabouts."

Clubhouse calamity

Knole Paddock project stalled by planning hiccup

By **STEVE TERVET**

SEVENOAKS Rugby Club have run into difficulties as they look to start work on the extension to their Knole Paddock clubhouse.

Having been awarded a £95,000 grant by the Rugby Football Union, the club had hoped to commence building work this weekend on facilities designed to house improved changing and shower facilities.

Granted planning permission and approval back in 2008, everything seemed in place for the Oaks to press ahead, but the club last week received a letter from Sevenoaks Town Council informing them construction work could not begin.

With the council still unhappy with the terms of the long-term lease for the clubhouse, the matter is now in the hands of the club's lawyers and Oaks president Howard Pearl expressed his frustration at the drawn-out process.

"The hiccup is that the town council want to introduce restrictions on the use of our facility," he said. "We need that money, it's part of our income, and we've done responsible hiring for the last 30 years to responsible organisations and charities."

"We've given about six alternative ways of getting round this and they've all been rejected by the council."

"This has been going on for about eight months and it's come to a head now. We'd like to begin now and we're still hoping, one way or the other, to get things sorted before the end of the month."



FRUSTRATION: Sevenoaks (in blue and gold) were awarded £95,000 grant to revamp their clubhouse but planning issues have prevented them from beginning construction work

A spokesman for the council said: "Sevenoaks Town Council has recently learned that the rugby club no longer want to enter into this long-term lease and therefore negotiations on the variation to the current lease need to take place and be agreed to enable the extension to commence."

On the field, Sevenoaks' promotion hopes may be effectively over, but they returned to winning ways on Saturday with a battling display to overcome Warlingham 36-20.

Sitting fifth in London 2 South East with four games remaining, Oaks have effectively started their pre-season preparations for the 2011/12

campaign, but Pearl said there were plenty of positives to take from the Warlingham win.

"It was much better, more of a team effort," he said. "We had some senior players back and some good youngsters in the side too so there was a good blend of youth and experience."

This weekend, Sevenoaks will expect to take maximum points as they host basement club Purley John Fisher, who have lost all 19 of their league games.

When the sides met in Surrey four weeks ago, Oaks swept to a 64-0 win and the reverse fixture is unlikely to provide the home side with any more of a test.



FRESH BLOOD: Tunbridge Wells hope to add to their squad in time for next season

Creativity key as Wells look for new breed

RECRUITMENT is already under way at St Mark's as Tunbridge Wells look to bring in the creative players needed to fire them to promotion next season.

The Wells have scored just 169 points in 22 league games and their lack of try-scoring potential has been a key factor in their relegation from London 1 South this season.

While the remaining four games of this campaign are effectively dead-rubbers, chairman Roger Clarke revealed moves were already afoot to give the Wells a realistic chance of bouncing back up at the first attempt.

He said: "We're talking to a range of people who feel that we're creating the right social atmosphere and the right facilities."

"One or two have gone away and haven't got into other people's first-teams. [Head coach] Jim Scully and [chairman of playing] Jim Hendley have got a list they're working through because we still need guys who can make a break and score; I'm not sure where our tries are coming from."

On Saturday, Dover are the visitors to St Mark's for a Kent derby and Clarke expects his side to match the levels which took them so close to victory at Wimbledon last weekend.

Having led for much of the game, the Wells conceded a late try to lose 20-17 and the manner of the defeat ensured their first bonus point of the season failed to provide any consolation.



TITLE CHARGE: Tonbridge Juddians crushed Chobham 96-0 last week

Dankert hails attacking prowess as TJs march on

JUST two games stand between Tonbridge Juddians and a third successive promotion following their crushing win at relegated Chobham on Saturday.

TJs overwhelmed the Surrey side 96-0 and head coach Peter Dankert hailed the performance as one of the best under his stewardship after what was a thoroughly one-sided contest.

With three of their remaining four games to be played at The Slade, TJs can only throw the title away from a position of such strength, with second-placed London Irish Amateur still 13 points adrift.

Reflecting on the Chobham win, Dankert said: "We got a very good assessment because we played with a lot of speed and we overpowered the opposition."

"It really was one of our best performances for a long time and they were quite shocked at our speed and the way we attacked."

Dankert will recall Pat Sykes and Arthur Evans for the visit of Sutton & Epsom on Saturday, after the pair were rested last weekend.

With the championship now inevitable, TJs can begin to look

forward to National League rugby, but Dankert insists his side's intensity will not drop even when they are mathematically out of reach.

"We want to get it done as soon as we possibly can," he said. "We've got a game against [third-placed] Chichester on the last day of the season and London Irish will be expecting us to take it easy, but we've got a home record to protect."

"We will play that last game to the best of our ability because we won't give someone a second spot by playing a weakened team."

Defeat all but condemns Cranes to the drop

CRANBROOK'S bid to survive in London 3 South East is effectively over following a damaging defeat to Bromley on Saturday.

While the mathematical permutations still offer them a way out of trouble, it looks as though the 44-12 reverse has spelt the end for the Cranes, with three sides set to be promoted from the county leagues.

For the second game running, Cranbrook were hit by a serious injury as second-row Dave Anthony departed with a broken arm to compound the visitors' misery.

"We needed to win against

Bromley," admitted Cranbrook's director of rugby, Mike Catt.

"It all depends who comes up and who goes down, but that's put us in a bit of trouble. It's going to be very difficult now, but we're just rebuilding for next season."

The Cranes will at least be looking to salvage some pride from their disappointing season when they host basement club Dartfordians on Saturday.

When the sides met four weeks ago, Cranbrook returned to west Kent with a 53-24 victory under their belts.



RELEGATION: Cranbrook need a miracle to avoid going down

RUGBY LEAGUE TABLES

LONDON 1 SOUTH

	P	W	D	L	PD	BP	Pts
1 Tonbridge Juddians	22	21	2	3	+697	17	101
2 London Irish Amateur	22	17	2	3	+376	15	88
3 Chichester	22	17	2	3	+416	15	87
4 Haywards Heath	22	13	1	8	+184	12	66
5 Beckenham	22	13	3	7	+79	8	62
6 Dover	22	11	1	10	+112	15	61
7 Portsmouth	22	11	2	9	-28	9	57
8 Sutton & Epsom	22	9	2	11	+59	14	54
9 Thanet Wanderers	22	9	2	11	-165	6	46
10 Hove	22	8	0	14	+93	14	46
11 Cobham	22	9	1	12	-129	7	45
12 Wimbledon	22	6	1	15	-398	6	32
13 Tunbridge Wells	22	1	1	20	-582	1	7
14 Chobham	22	0	2	20	-675	3	7

LONDON 2 SOUTH EAST

1 Old Elthamians	19	17	0	2	+399	13	81
2 Lewes	19	13	0	6	+249	11	63
3 Aylesford Bulls	17	13	0	4	+179	7	59
4 East Grinstead (-15)	18	14	1	3	+438	13	56
5 Sevenoaks	18	10	0	8	+193	13	53
6 Brighton	17	9	1	7	+25	10	48
7 Maidstone	18	8	0	10	-102	5	37
8 Warlingham	19	7	0	12	-195	6	34
9 Old Dunstonians	19	5	1	13	-50	9	31
10 Old Mid-Whitgiftian	19	4	2	13	-404	5	25
11 Deal & Betseshanger (-15)	18	7	1	10	-49	7	22
12 Purley John Fisher (-5)	19	0	0	19	-683	2	-3

LONDON 3 SOUTH EAST

1 Heathfield & Waldron	19	17	0	2	+354	15	83
2 Crowborough	19	16	1	2	+370	15	81
3 Charlton Park	19	16	2	1	+394	12	80
4 Medway	18	10	0	8	+100	11	51
5 Park House	19	9	2	8	-3	10	50
6 Folkestone	19	9	0	10	+53	9	45
7 Eastbourne	19	9	1	9	-47	7	45
8 Bromley	19	7	1	11	-61	7	37
9 Crawley	19	5	0	14	-263	6	26
10 Hove	19	5	2	12	-150	6	25
11 Cranbrook	19	3	0	16	-318	5	17
12 Dartfordians	18	2	1	15	-429	2	12

FIXTURES

LONDON 1 SOUTH: Tonbridge Juddians v Sutton & Epsom;

Tunbridge Wells v Dover

LONDON 2 SOUTH EAST: Sevenoaks v Purley John Fisher

LONDON 3 SOUTH EAST: Cranbrook v Dartfordians

Picture: NICK DUNGAN



WINNER: Mark Axell struck for Town

Town squeeze past Corinthian thanks to Axell

Corinthian 0

Sevenoaks Town 1

A SOLITARY Mark Axell strike was enough to hand Sevenoaks Town their second win in four days as they edged past Corinthian on Tuesday night.

The winning goal came midway through the first-half, with Axell rising to turn home Joe Minter's cross at the far post, consigning his former side to defeat.

Town had plenty of chances to add to their lead, with Minter's dipping free-kick forcing a fine save from Jack Rankin in the Corinthian goal.

Sevenoaks stopper Dan Bygrave had little to do all evening, but he was suddenly thrust into the spotlight on the hour-mark when Daniel Gannon was fouled in the box.

Lee Barnett stepped up to take the spot-kick but Bygrave won the duel, diving low to his left to save the penalty to preserve Town's slender advantage.

Bourne ultimatum

Skipper issues rallying cry to team-mates in bid to finish season on high ahead of cup final

By **STEVE TERVET**

TUNBRIDGE Wells skipper Jason Bourne has urged his team-mates to take their cup form into the Kent League and fire the club to a top-four finish.

Bourne led the Wells to a 1-0 victory over Holmesdale in the Kent Senior Trophy semi-final on Saturday, but is hungry for success on more than one front.

Having set themselves several collective targets at the start of the season, the Wells are on course to achieve each of their goals, with Bourne insisting they are still in with a shout of challenging the division's top sides.

He said: "We set ourselves a few targets, to get through a few rounds of the FA Vase and FA Cup, we've ticked those off and now we've got to the cup final. The only one left now is to push for the top-four so hopefully we can put a run together and break into that group."

Buzz

"It makes the season go all the way to the wire and everyone will be switched on right to the end of the season. Sometimes, when you've got nothing to play for, your standards can slip, but we're got everything to play for and a nice day out in April."

Bourne is one of three survivors from the Wells' last cup final, when VCD Athletic edged them out on penalties to lift the Kent Senior Trophy in 2006.

The cup final buzz is one Bourne is keen to taste again when the Wells face Erith Town on April 17, although he is desperately hoping this season's story has a happier ending.

"It was a fantastic day and we had really



Picture: NICK DUNGAN

TARGET: Tunbridge Wells captain Jason Bourne is hungry for league and cup success

good support, but unfortunately we got on the wrong end of the result," Bourne said. "I've tasted defeat in a cup final and I don't want that again."

"A couple of the other lads played that day, Sam Phillips and Alex Rich, and that will drive them on because losing a cup final wasn't the end to the day we wanted."

If the Wells are to turn their ambition into tangible progress in the league, they will need striker Keelan Mooney and Carl 'Hooley' Cornell to maintain the form which has seen them net a total of 31 goals this season.

Both have been approached by rival clubs in recent weeks, but neither has been tempted by a move away and Bourne does not expect the situation to change any time soon.

"Talking to Keelan and Hooley, they're not going anywhere," he said. "If they got Ryman Premier offers, they're sure to go to progress, but there's no way they'd go to another Kent League side."

"They're more than happy here, they're playing good football and they've got a good partnership. They're great lads and any other teams are wasting their time by approaching them."

Town boss foiled in his latest bid to sign Lye

SEVENOAKS Town manager Keith Levett has hit a stumbling block in his latest attempts to bring in fresh faces at Greatness Park.

Having hoped to sign Danny Lye in time for last weekend's home game against Greenwich Borough, Levett was let down at the last minute, with work commitments keeping the former Maidstone and Faversham player away.

Another player Levett wants to recruit is Billy Driver, although the Stones striker is self-employed and similarly unable to commit to regular first-team football.

"I'll speak to Danny and see if he'll possibly come down for the remainder of the season," Levett said. "We need somebody with his experience to come in, but whether he wants to come is debatable. I've spoken to Maidstone and they say good things about Billy, but he's self-employed and I understand what that means."

On Saturday, Town entertain Kent League title contenders Herne Bay, looking to build on an impressive 3-1 win over Greenwich last weekend, and the 1-0 win at Corinthian on Tuesday night.

Levett is keen to set the record straight against Bay, having seen his side edged out 2-1 when the pair met at Winch's Field in November.

"Anyone who watched the game would agree we weren't rewarded for our performance," he insisted. "We're looking to make



Picture: STEVE TERVET

PURSUIT: Danny Lye (in yellow playing for Maidstone) is a target for Sevenoaks

amends because we felt we should have got a result down there. We don't fear them and we'll go out to win the game."

Back to reality for Wells with two trips to capital

MENTAL toughness is the key for Tunbridge Wells this weekend as they return to league action with two tricky away games in the space of three days.

Manager Martin Larkin takes his side to Mile End on Saturday for a game against Sporting Bengal United, the side rooted to the bottom of the Kent League.

The Wells are back in the capital on Monday night with third-bottom Fisher their opposition at Champion Hill, and Larkin has urged his players to treat each game on its own merits.

With the memory of Saturday's Kent Senior Trophy semi-final win over Holmesdale still fresh in their minds, the Wells face two very different challenges this weekend as they bid to make up for lost time in their league campaign.

Larkin said: "We need to be right mentally [on Saturday] because it's a very open, windy place up there, it's not the nicest place to go. We'd like to have had another home game after the semi-final, but that can't be helped."

"If Saturday becomes 'after the Lord Mayor's show' then changes will be made, because if people want to play in the cup final, they have to play well in the league."

When Sporting visited Culverden Stadium in October, the Wells offered supporters free entry and reaped the rewards with a bumper gate of 301.

Carl Cornell scored four goals before half-time as the hosts romped to a 7-1 win that



Picture: NICK DUNGAN

RETURN: Carl Cornell is expected back after missing cup semi-final with illness

day and the striker is expected to return for the Wells this weekend after missing the semi-final through illness.

"We need to get about them early, get a couple of early goals," Larkin said. "It's important we concentrate on the league because I don't want to be stood here in May with a cup winners' medal, but having finished 12th or 13th. That would be a waste of time."

Striker hopes to fire Tonbridge to play-offs

By **GLENN PEARSON**

CARL Rook turned down the chance to play in the Conference Premier to rejoin Tonbridge Angels on a loan deal to the end of the season.

The striker, who left Tonbridge last season to join Dartford, was loaned back to the Angels last week and started in the two recent draws against Kingstonian and Wealdstone.

Rook admitted he was surprised at the speed of the move back to Longmead having been told last Tuesday by Dartford boss Tony Burman that he needed to go out on loan and get some games.

Conference Premier side Eastbourne Borough had expressed an interest, as had Carshalton Athletic, but when Angels boss Tommy Warrilow came calling, there was only one place the former Horsham man was going.

Rook said: "Tony Burman told me I was going out on loan on the Tuesday and by Thursday I was back at Tonbridge."

"It was quite a surprise to me if I'm honest, but there are three strikers at Dartford fighting for one place and I've been in and out of the side. The manager said I needed to get out and get some games and I agreed. I made the decision to go back to Tonbridge, which was an easy one really; they're pushing for promotion so hopefully I can score some goals to get us there."

The 28-year-old scaffolder admitted the prospect of playing in the Conference Premier with Eastbourne Borough had appealed, but having looked at away trips to Wrexham, Gateshead and Southport in the next few weeks, work commitments ruled it out.

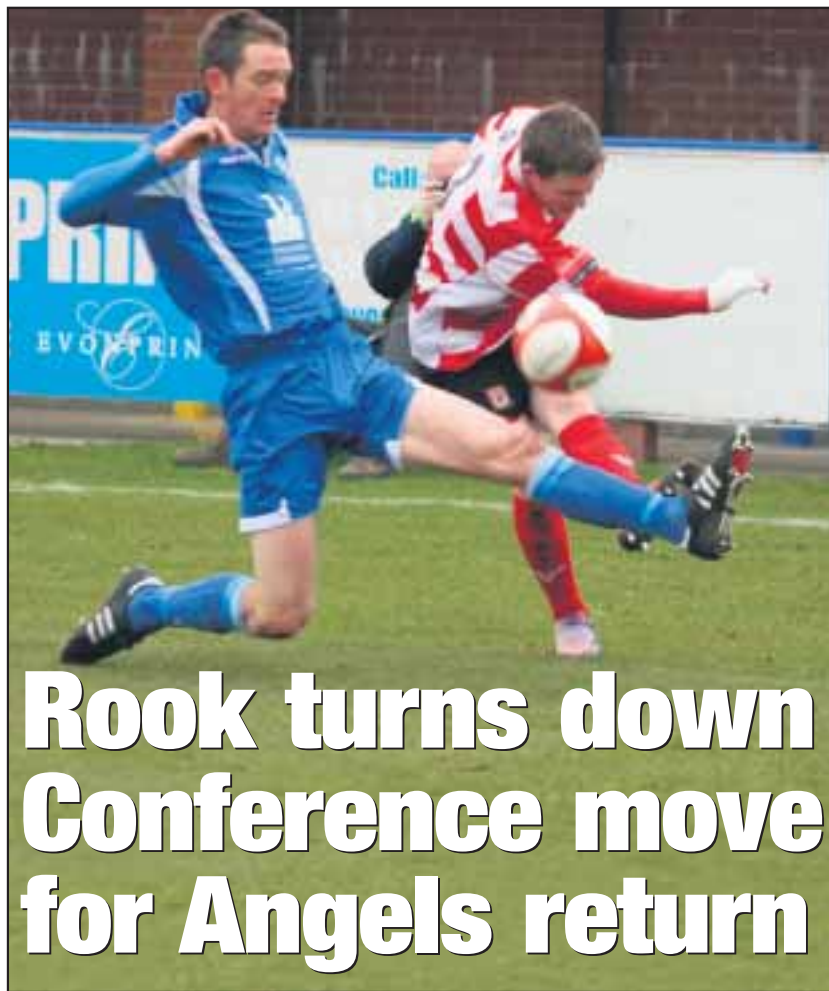
Target

Having experienced the agony of missing out in the play-offs with the Angels in his first spell, Rook, who hit 62 goals in 84 games in that time, is confident Tonbridge have the squad to go one better this time around.

Warrilow has also set him a goal target for the remaining games of the season, and the striker says promotion for Tonbridge to the Conference South next season may come into the equation when it comes to sorting out his future this summer.

He said: "It's a shame if it has not worked out at Dartford, whether the manager sees something in me he does not like, I don't know."

"I'd love to be able to help Tonbridge go up and Tommy has set me a target of 10 goals in the last 12 games and hopefully I can achieve that. This is the best squad he has



RETURN: Carl Rook has returned to Angels on loan and says he is not sure whether his future lies with Dartford (left) or elsewhere

had at the club, and he's had some good players in the last few years, but not many would get in this side.

Bumper crowd expected for Stones visit

PASSIONS will be running high on Saturday as Tonbridge Angels entertain Kent rivals Maidstone United in a game which carries huge significance at both ends of the Ryman Premier Division.

While Tonbridge are battling to keep their promotion push on track, the Stones are desperately battling to drag themselves out of the relegation zone.

A fixture which rewards the winners with local bragging rights should attract a bumper Longmead crowd, and Angels manager Tommy Warrilow will not fall into the trap of treating the game as a home banker.

The odds, however, are stacked heavily in his side's favour. Maidstone have conceded nine goals in their last two away games and Angels striker Frannie Collin scored a hat-trick in a 3-0 Tonbridge win at Homelands last month, although he has gone seven games without a goal.

Warrilow said: "Maidstone have got very good players, so I don't know why they're down there. There's always a little bit of spice for this game, there'll be a big crowd, but the most important thing is to get a win under our belts. All the games since January have been 'must-win' but there is no pressure on the lads."

Maidstone were beaten 1-0 by high-flying Lowestoft Town on Saturday, with Jay May



IN CONTENTION: Ade Olorunda (celebrating) has recovered from a head injury and (right) boss Tommy Warrilow says Maidstone are better than their league position suggests

making his debut for Andy Ford's side after being released by Tonbridge last week.

Warrilow let the striker go in order to free up the funds needed to sign Carl Rook on loan from Dartford, and he knows his former player will pose a genuine threat in the derby.

"It was the hardest decision I've had to make since I've been at this club," he said. "It was



just about goals, nothing else, and it wasn't done overnight. It was a thought-out process and I didn't take the decision lightly, so Jay has nothing to prove to me."

Striker Ade Olorunda is in contention to play some part at Longmead on Saturday after recovering from the head injury he sustained in Angels' 2-1 win at Hastings United.

FOOTBALL LEAGUE TABLES

RYMAN LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION										
	P	W	L	D	GF	GA	GD	PTS		
1 Sutton United	33	20	7	6	62	29	+33	67		
2 Bury Town	31	16	10	5	52	36	+16	58		
3 Lowestoft Town	30	15	11	4	49	21	+28	56		
4 Tonbridge Angels	32	16	8	8	54	39	+15	56		
5 AFC Hornchurch	31	15	8	8	42	35	+7	53		
6 Kingstonian	32	15	7	10	46	38	+8	52		
7 Billericay Town	31	15	6	10	44	37	+7	51		
8 Cray Wanderers	31	14	7	10	55	34	+21	49		
9 Concord Rangers	32	14	7	11	53	47	+6	49		
10 Canvey Island	30	13	9	8	49	39	+10	48		
11 Harrow Borough	30	14	5	11	57	40	+17	47		
12 Wealdstone	32	13	8	11	51	43	+8	47		
13 Carshalton Athletic	32	12	7	13	41	38	+3	43		
14 Tooting & Mitcham	30	10	8	12	45	60	-15	38		
15 Hendon	29	10	7	12	50	55	-5	37		
16 Margate	31	9	9	13	37	40	-3	36		
17 Horsham	33	8	8	17	31	64	-33	32		
18 Hastings United	31	6	8	17	33	49	-16	26		
19 Aveley	30	7	5	18	22	43	-21	26		
20 Folkestone Invicta	31	5	10	16	27	43	-16	25		
21 Croydon Athletic (-3)	31	7	4	20	34	72	-38	22		
22 Maidstone United	31	4	9	18	28	60	-32	21		

KENT LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION										
1 Hythe Town	18	13	2	3	50	21	+29	41		
2 Erith Town	20	11	5	4	43	20	+23	38		
3 Herne Bay	18	11	5	2	34	21	+13	38		
4 VCD Athletic	19	9	8	2	31	21	+10	35		
5 Greenwich Borough	20	10	0	10	43	27	+16	30		
6 Beckenham Town	18	9	3	6	34	28	+6	30		
7 Sevenoaks Town	20	9	3	8	29	28	+1	30		
8 Tunbridge Wells	17	7	4	6	40	29	+11	25		
9 Erith & Belvedere	17	7	4	6	31	27	+4	25		
10 Norton Sports	18	6	7	5	29	32	-3	25		
11 Corinthian	20	7	3	10	21	28	-7	24		
12 Lordswood	19	6	2	11	25	34	-9	20		
13 Deal Town	20	6	2	12	24	39	-15	20		
14 Fisher	22	6	2	14	24	47	-23	20		
15 Holmesdale	20	4	7	9	22	29	-7	19		
16 Sporting Bengal	22	3	3	16	26	75	-49	12		

SATURDAY'S FIXTURES

(All games kick-off at 3pm unless otherwise stated)

RYMAN PREMIER DIVISION:
Tonbridge Angels v Maidstone United
KENT LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION: Sevenoaks Town v Herne Bay, Sporting Bengal United v Tunbridge Wells



OFF: Lewis Taylor was shown a red card

Two sent off as Tonbridge draw at Wealdstone

Tonbridge Angels 0
Wealdstone 0

TONBRIDGE Angels were relieved to take a share of the spoils from Monday's trip to Wealdstone as they ended the game with just nine men.

Danny Walder and Lewis Taylor both collected two bookings at Grosvenor Vale and Tonbridge manager Tommy Warrilow was also sent from the dugout during an action-packed second-half.

In the dying minutes, Wealdstone were awarded a penalty for handball, but Lee Worgan was equal to Peter Dean's spot-kick and the game ended goalless.

"The way the game finished, it's definitely a point gained," Warrilow said. "In the second-half, we never got out at all and they got at us. I wasn't happy with how we finished, but emotions were running a bit high to talk about it straight away."

Carl Rook went close to putting the visitors ahead in the first-half when his effort was turned against the post, while Wealdstone debutant Gavin Massey missed two decent opportunities to score for the home side.

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Spring/Summer edition

Are the county's youngest pupils being betrayed?

'Even deprived Peckham is beating some Kent primary schools'

■ BY NICK AMES

PRIMARY-school education across the county is to come under the microscope as results continue to be poor.

Staff, governors, parents and even pupils may be asked to help explain why Kent's primary schools are underperforming in comparison with the rest of the UK.

Progress in the county's Key Stage 2 Sats results has been below the national average for many years, with 17 per cent of schools currently failing to achieve the 55 per cent floor target of pupils achieving Level 4 and above in English and maths combined.

Members of Kent County Council's attainment select committee will be holding a year-long review into the issue. They say that evidence from children could be taken into account in an attempt to get to the root of the problem.

And the KCC review is not before time, according to Gravesend education expert Peter Read, who called the statistics "devastating".

"Ten per cent of the [county's] 200 bottom schools are in this county. Kent has a large infrastructure of officers supposed to be supporting these schools, but why is support not turning into action?" said Mr Read.

"If you look at Ofsted reports, there are concerns about leadership. What is clear is that in a number of schools when good senior staff leave, standards fall. There are examples of



LITTLE REASON TO BE CHEERFUL:
County councillor Chris Wells and Kent education expert Peter Read

where a school is failing and they are advertising for a new head. Instead, they need to bring in outside help to get the school up to standard before advertising."

Mr Read said that from his own personal experience, leadership was key.

He said: "My grandson goes to school in deprived Peckham, yet 98 per cent of children got Level 4 in English and maths.

"KCC may say some of its schools are in deprived areas, but I'm willing to bet that none of them is as deprived as Peckham. If a school there can deliver those standards, so can schools in Kent. It is down to outstanding leadership from the head."

The select committee is chaired by the council's former cabinet member for education, Chris Wells (Con).

He said: "Nationally, there's an issue of achievement at KS2 and we seem to have got ourselves on the wrong side of that in many of our schools.

"We have pockets of deprivation in Kent, and people tend to think the two are linked, and while that's generally

true, it's not always the case. We still see examples of schools in wealthy areas that are not doing so well, as well as some in deprived areas that are doing better than we might have expected.

"Therefore there must be other factors that come into it, such as the effect a change in leadership might have on a school.

"If we find during the review that there is a direct link, we can give extra support during the period when a head-teacher leaves and a replacement comes in."

Introduced in 1995, the Key Stage 2 Sats – officially National Curriculum Tests – apply to pupils sitting their final year of primary education.

The results of the multiple-choice exams have a large influence on where a school finishes in official league tables, which some unions say leads to children spending too much time learning how to tackle them and not enough on other subjects.

As a result, 24 primaries out of more than 400 in Kent took part in a national boycott last May.

The review by the KCC committee will run alongside a consultation on the future of the test being overseen by the Department for Education.

Cllr Wells said there were many possible reasons why some pupils performed better at KS2 than others.

He said: "You also have to consider those children who do not eat breakfast or do not do their homework, as well as looked-after children who tend to do less well in school."

The select committee is due to publish its report and recommendations in December.



Students' art transforms city's disused underpass

STUDENTS from Canterbury's University of the Creative Arts have been transforming one of the city's eyesores.

The disused and boarded-up underpass across the road from the bus station is the unlikely venue for an exhibition entitled Origins.

Artist Georgia Buckland, above, said: "Everybody who comes down here is interested in how we have used this space. They are happy to see it being brought back into use.

"Some of the work chosen for the exhibition includes sound-installation, an abstract representation of a womb and a mythical family tree."

• Full story on page 6. For a further look at the exhibits, visit www.yourkenttv.co or Youtube.



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Industry and education work together to get our young into employment



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Colleges prepare to do battle to win over the latest post-16 students

ALSO INSIDE...

- 4 Childcare feels the pinch
- 7 The politics of learning
- 12 Revolutionary times
- 15 The business solution
- 15 International appeal

Uncertain future for children's centres as budget is reduced

■ BY ED HILL

CHANGES to Government funding could threaten the future of services offered at children's centres.

SureStart centres introduced by the previous Labour government offer such support for parents as antenatal classes, baby clinics, breastfeeding advice, parenting, speech and language, play sessions, help for children with special needs and disabilities, and links to child-minder networks.

However, the Coalition Government wants to focus money more on children with difficult backgrounds to help them get a good start.

Its grant for children's centres will no longer be ring-fenced. Instead it will be included in a larger overall fund called the Early Intervention Grant. This means a reduction in funding of some 10 per cent, leading to tighter budgets at children's centres, which may well have to reduce their services.

Last year, more than £54 million was given by central government for children of pre-school age in Kent.

The Early Intervention Grant introduced in April will mean an overall drop in funding of more than £4.5m. At present about £24m of this budget is spent on children's centres.

The Government says it has ensured that there will be enough funding for the centres to remain open, but some local authorities have already announced closures and many have told staff that their jobs could be at risk.

At the very least, it looks as if other services for youngsters will have to be cut so that SureStart centres can remain open.

Two children's charities surveyed managers of children's centres, asking how they expected the next year's funding would affect them.

The report, carried out by 4Children and the Daycare Trust, estimated that some 250 centres could close in the UK and 1,000 jobs were at risk.

It has urged local authorities who will have to distribute the money to concentrate it on young vulnerable children and families.



Anne Longfield, chief executive of 4Children, said: "Families across the country, particularly the most vulnerable, depend on SureStart children's centres to help get their children off to the best start in life.

"We know local authorities have some extremely difficult spending decisions to make, but investment now will lead to real savings in the longer term.

"Local authorities need to find new

ways to ensure SureStart children's centres earn their keep by allowing them to become genuine hubs for all children and family services in communities, reducing replication and improving impacts.

"Voluntary and community organisations stand ready to help councils find innovative solutions to these funding dilemmas."

Children's Minister Sarah Teather said: "We have ensured there is enough money in the system to maintain the network of SureStart services.

"We have secured funding for free childcare for three- and four-year-olds as well as the most disadvantaged two-year-olds.

"As councils make their spending decisions in the coming months, I hope they recognise the priority the Government has placed on early education.

"We know high-quality early-years support can have a lasting impact on children's lives, so we will expect local authorities to channel their resources at those who will benefit most from the excellent support children's centres can offer."

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NURSERY PROVISION

Education for Kent

Childcare companies face recession blues

■ BY JOE BILL

NURSERIES and childcare companies are facing a challenging time as the recession forces parents to cut back on childcare.

With job losses continuing across the county, it is feared that for many putting young children into day-care could be among the first parental expenses to be axed.

Jackie Puxted, managing director of the Twinkle Toes day nursery in Faversham, believes that when times are tight, parents will look to make quick cuts to their outgoings.

She said: "For a lot of people, when they are out of work, dropping childcare is the easiest way to save money."

"If they are at home, there would be no need to send them to nursery. But as a parent myself, I would try to re-evaluate my finances to make sure my children still had the opportunity to learn the vital social skills at nursery."

"So far Twinkle Toes has been OK and we have not really had anyone

FEARS:
Jackie Puxted believes children will miss out on vital social skills if they leave nursery



pull out. Right now, we probably have too many applying to come here, if anything, so we are doing well."

But Jackie, who managed the Abbey School day nursery before taking it over in 2009 and renaming it Twinkle Toes, believes that areas of Kent that sustain heavy job cuts will lead to a downturn for nurseries.

She said: "I am sure with Pfizer closing in Sandwich, childcare in that area will decline. It is a lot easier to keep your children at home when you

are out of work. I have also been told that some other nearby areas have seen a downturn in numbers."

The Daycare Trust, a national children's charity, has expressed concern after 900 nurseries and playgroups closed in England last year.

It reported that the cost of a nursery place had risen by almost 5 per cent in the last year, averaging between £79 and £109 for 25 hours of care a week.

• For more about the Daycare Trust, visit www.daycaretrust.org.uk.

Winds of change

PRIMARY schools around the county are becoming increasingly involved in sustainable-energy projects.

Aldington primary school, near Ashford, recently received £14,676 from the ScottishPower Green Energy Trust so it could install a wind turbine and solar photovoltaic panels.

More and more schools are applying for such grants to install energy-generating technology, educate pupils about sustainable energy and save money.

The wind turbine and photovoltaic cells are expected to generate 37,400 kWh of energy per year, making the school self-sufficient.

Surplus power will be fed back to the National Grid under a buy-back tariff, which will help to raise money for the school.

Head-teacher Sandra MacCourt said: "The key motivation for our micro-generation project is to encourage pupils to learn about the importance of renewable energy generation."

The Kent Energy Centre has also carried out a survey of schools to look at their potential for generating power.

For example, it found that the Churchill School, near Folkestone, had potential to produce electricity because of high wind speeds and sunlight levels.

Schools in the independent sector are also benefiting from green power.



Kent College preparatory school in Pembury was given £20,000 by ScottishPower to install solar thermal heating in its indoor swimming pool.

The installation also included visual-display units to monitor its energy-saving progress.

The solar thermal heating will reduce the school's gas usage by about 50 per cent.

Richard Green, assistant bursar, said: "By showing commitment to green issues, we hope to set an example to our pupils. The eco-technology creates a vital and visual renewable energy source."

Alison McKean, environmental policy manager at ScottishPower, said: "These projects are only possible through our customers, who contribute to our green tariff."



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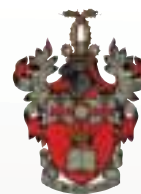
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EMPLOYABILITY

Education for Kent

'Some pupils are leaving school without vital workplace skills'

EXPLORING the way that schools and industry can work together is one of the specialities of education expert Els Howard.

Ms Howard, from Hythe, has been instrumental in bringing about projects linking business and learning and putting students into community-based initiatives.

And she feels that a mutual relationship between the world of the classroom and workplace can only be beneficial to both.

"Industry needs to understand what education can deliver, and education needs to understand what industry is looking for," she said.

A skills fair at Folkestone's Leas Cliff Hall in February saw companies set up stands to show groups of students what they do.

It was organised by Ms Howard as part of her drive to encourage cooperation between both fields.

"Schools are looking more and more to involve local organisations and businesses," she said.

"Some have even put GCSE exams back to year 10 so that year 11 is freed up to do work placements. Students either go to a company or do volunteer work.

"Qualifications [academically] are one thing, but students – some, not all – come out without skills that are vital in the workplace.

To see this clip, search 'Howard' @ yourkenttv.co.uk



Els Howard on how industry and education need to cooperate to help with student job opportunities

"These could be communication, working together, or something such as leadership.

"It is also important that where students are involved in a project, there is an end product – something to get them excited."

Ms Howard feels that a pioneering project in Ashford is one way forward.

It involves local schools and fragrance manufacturer Givaudan – a world-market-leader

whose products include a top-selling perfume range for pop star Jennifer Lopez.

Although based in the US, the business runs a plant just outside Ashford.

"The company went to schools that run A-level photography courses and said they needed new artwork for a suite of offices," said Ms Howard. "The brief was for the students to select a subject and then present a 15-minute brief on their work and why it would be suitable to company executives. Wouldn't that experience look great on a CV?"

The range of work opportunities in a company is something that students need to be made more aware of, says Ms Howard.

"Let's take EDF Energy as an example – they were at the fair," she said. "Students may think that is not for them – they have no interest in engineering or electricity.

"But EDF is a French company, they need people with language skills, they need lawyers, accountants, marketing people – many other employees with different skills."

Ms Howard also feels that such cooperation is important to keep communities working on a local level.

"Young people need to be made aware of the opportunities that exist on their doorstep," she said. "To see a constant drain of talent from any town will not do a society any good at all.

"By showing what is available locally, Kent's towns can retain talent that might have gone elsewhere."

Longer lessons? Yes please...

STUDENTS at the Strood Academy were given a chance to have a say in how their school was run – and opted to have longer lessons.

The 1,370-pupil academy opened its doors for the first time in September 2009.

At that time pupils had five one-hour lessons every day.

"It wasn't long enough for the range of activities the children wanted in their lessons," said Richard Hart, the school's head-teacher. "For instance, they couldn't finish their practical activities in science.

"As a consequence, we switched to four lessons of a longer duration and now they can finish things like that."

Involving the pupils in their education is part of strategies adopted by the academy as it strives to improve performance.

"They are unbelievably honest in what they say and you get accurate feedback from them," said Hart.

The academy, jointly sponsored by Medway Council and the University For The Creative Arts, which has a campus in Rochester, was born out of a merger between two single-sex comprehensive schools, Chapter Girls' School and Temple boys' school.

Both were on the Government's national challenge hit-list of schools that had failed to get 30 per cent of their pupils to obtain five A* to C grade passes including in maths and English.

Four years ago, Temple was at the very bottom of the league tables, with just 2 per cent of its pupils obtaining the benchmark.

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SELECTIVE POLICY

Education for Kent

Politicians do battle over the structure of schools system

EXCLUSIVE

■ BY NICK AMES

ASTORM has broken out over the future of education across the county after a leading Labour politician hit out against selective education and the Coalition Government's free-schools policy.

In a hard-hitting speech, shadow education secretary Andy Burnham said his party was firmly committed to comprehensive education – rather than grammars or free schools.

“For me, the values of the comprehensive system are as intrinsic to the Labour Party DNA as the values of the NHS,” he said.

Kent and Medway have almost a quarter of Britain's grammar schools – so education experts have been studying the plans.

And Folkestone and Hythe MP Damian Collins, whose constituency includes two grammar schools, said the issue was one of freedom of choice for parents and pupils.

He then accused Mr Burnham of showing a lack of trust in people to make the correct decision by calling for more state control.



VALUES: Shadow education secretary Andy Burnham says no to the free-schools idea

Mr Burnham said: “What I would do in areas where selection had been expanded is to give all parents a say in whether they want that to continue. The problem at the moment is that we don't let all people have a say in it, so, for instance, the people who aren't at the grammar school don't get a say in whether the grammar school should continue.

“We'll see what we inherit, and you'd want to move that system back to a comprehensive system, but whether you do that by legislating with a sledgehammer, or whether you create

the tools for people who want to bring it back at local level, there's a debate to be had. But certainly there would be no more free schools.”

Mr Burnham added that part of his issue with Government policy was that the provision of free and grammar schools could be at the expense of surrounding establishments.

“It makes no sense if you set up a free school if you destabilise the six schools around it.”

Kent has 33 grammar schools, which is among the highest number percentage-wise in the UK. Medway has a further six out of a national total of 164.

Free schools are all-ability, state-funded establishments which the Government says are being set up in response to parental demand.

MPs say they enable excellent teachers to create schools and improve standards for all children, regardless of their background.

Charities, universities, businesses, educational groups, teachers and groups of parents are now able to get involved and start new schools.

Responding to Labour's statement, Mr Collins said that a process of balloting over the future of schools in any one area was already in place. And he said his party was committed to allowing the largest possible choice, adding: “Andy Burnham seems to believe that people cannot be trusted and there should be a greater level of state control. That is not something I believe.”

Buckets only answer to cuts

A HYTHE school is using buckets to collect water from leaking roofs after funding for repairs was cut as part of the Coalition Government's review on spending.

Brockhill Park Performing Arts College was to be refurbished this year – but the scheme was lost to Government cuts.

Head-teacher Sonette Schwartz said the conditions meant her pupils were being treated with contempt.

Ms Schwartz said pupils were often taught in classrooms where the floor was partly cordoned off to allow space for the buckets. She said work to the roofs of three buildings which leaked would cost £75,000 to mend and that other repairs total £1.5m.

“I just don't think it's appropriate that we have classrooms where teachers have to move buckets around. I think it smacks of contempt,” she said.

“We understand that the Building Schools for the Future was scrapped and that money is tight – that doesn't stop the roof leaking. It's going to get worse unless something is done quite urgently.”

Kent County Council said schools were responsible for their own repairs if the bill came to less than £20,000.

Last month, Kent County Council, together with five other local authorities, won its High Court challenge to Education Secretary Michael Gove's decision to axe the Building Schools for the Future project.

Mr Gove was ordered to reconsider his decision, but a Government spokesman said the judge had concluded “there was no promise or expectation” that the claimants' projects would proceed as planned.



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COMPETITION

Education for Kent

The fight is on for students

THE efforts made by further-education colleges to tempt post-16 students away from school sixth forms are likely to intensify in the face of new funding arrangements set in place by the Coalition Government.

The funding received by school sixth forms will fall by 15 per cent over the next four years and the extra 3 per cent of funds they currently get compared with further-education colleges will disappear by 2015.

This means that running courses with only a few students is not going to be an option for schools and colleges looking to go forward – they will need to increase group sizes to make some courses viable.

The financial incentive that schools are given to opt out of local-authority control and become academies also means the educational environment is becoming more fragmented.

In Medway, the fact that some schools have combined to become academies further alters the picture and is likely to lead to greater competition for post-16 students.

■ BY NICK AMES

Staff at MidKent College in Gillingham are keen to promote the fact that 82 per cent of their students who finished courses in 2009 are now in employment, and the indications are that this figure will increase for 2010.

They say they are focused on ensuring that students get the skills employers need.

A spokesman said: "Our state-of-the-art facilities are designed to replicate real working environments and give our students hands-on experience, which can give them a distinct advantage.

"It's also a common misconception that further-education colleges don't provide the same levels of support for students as those found in schools. At MidKent College our personal tutoring system ensures all students have someone, who isn't part of the lecturing staff, to support them throughout their course.

"There are also specialist teams to support learners with additional needs.

"For us, it's about working with all our students to give them the confidence and skills they will need to be successful in an increasingly competitive jobs market."

Neil Lakeland at Hadlow College is similarly aware of the forthcoming challenge.

"The market is becoming more competitive partly due to the forecast demographic dip – in which there are fewer 16-year-olds than there were in the past, due to falling birth-rates.

"There is also a widening of choice within the vocational sector – something further-education colleges are traditionally strong at – and therefore students have more options, which, coupled with the funding pressures, means the competition is increasing.

"Colleges represent a great place for students to learn and – certainly in the case of Hadlow, which has a residential aspect – develop crucial life skills.

"The outstanding provision and care which we give students – as demonstrated by our two Ofsted Grade 1 achievements, as well as the LSIS Beacon status we enjoy – is something which is important to us as a differentiating factor and we believe it gives both students and parents confidence in the college.

"Added to this are the facilities we have – no other college in Kent which offers land-based subjects has comparable facilities and therefore the student experience we give should be far superior."



VARIETY: Post-16 students are able to choose between academic and vocational courses

IT is that dreaded time of year when school- and college-leavers wait to hear if they have been provisionally accepted at their chosen universities.

Beyond even thinking about their much-publicised tuition fees, each student wanting to attend university is required to fill out a UCAS

application form. Within this, pupils must state their five choices of which course they want to study and at which university.

The institution will then make the student an offer based on their application. It can be a conditional offer dependent on the student's final grades, or it can be unconditional, so the stu-

dent has been accepted no matter what. However, some leavers will receive no offers at all and are forced to go through clearing at the end of the school term to find a different course and university to attend.

UCAS Extra enables students to have one more shot at gaining entry to a course which dif-

fers to their original choices. They can also contact universities to find out if they would be accepted so as to avoid any further headaches as well as the last-minute summer scramble.

• Visit www.ucas.com/students/offers/extra for more information about UCAS Extra and going through clearing.

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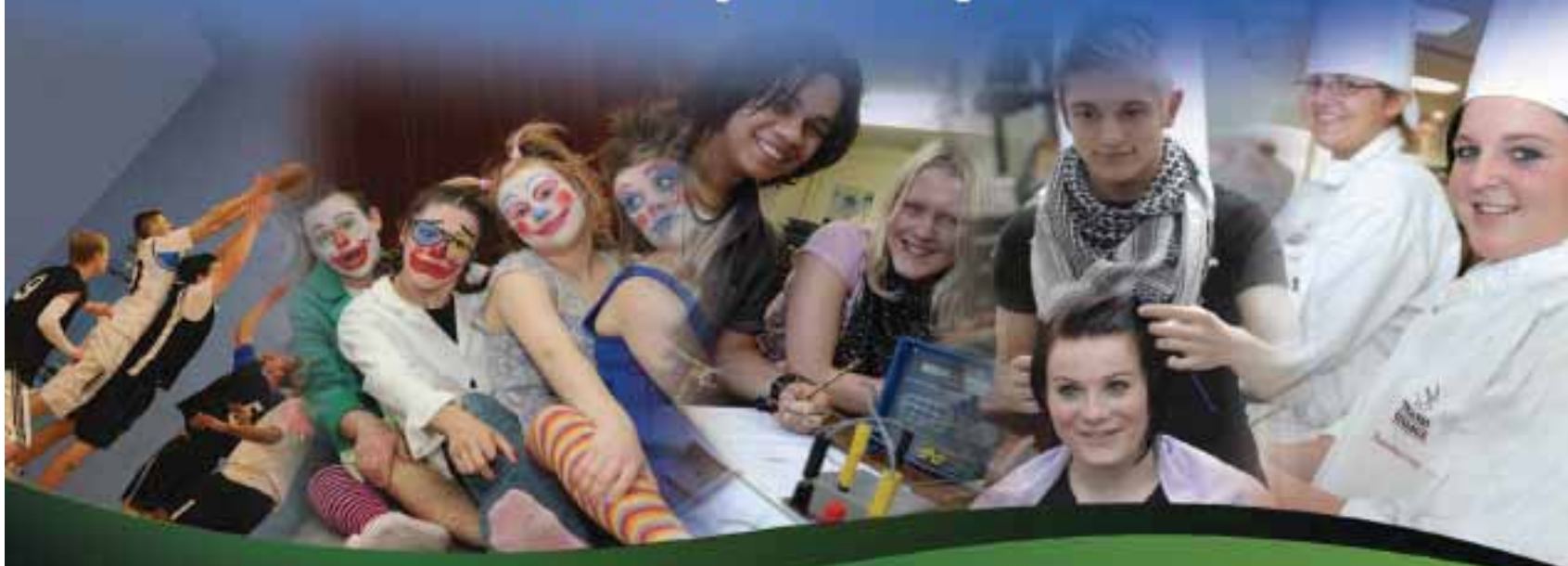
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SHARING FACILITIES

Education for Kent

'We're in the middle of a schooling revolution'

CO-OPERATION, along with sharing of facilities, teaching staff and classroom expertise, is the way ahead for Kent education, according to a leading county councillor.

Sarah Hohler, KCC's cabinet member for education, learning and skills, believes the UK is seeing a "revolution in education".

Cllr Hohler, who has teaching experience, "a passionate interest in education", four children and six grandchildren, believes in collaboration between schools, both at secondary and primary level.

Speaking exclusively to Archant KOS Media at a time when an increasing number of schools are choosing to opt out of local-government control and become academies, receiving their funding directly from Government, Cllr Hohler reaffirmed her commitment to the best opportunities for all.

"There are some fantastic things going on across the county when it comes to co-operation," she said.

"And, whether schools wish to become academies or stay with KCC, the benefits of this should be made available to the pupils.

"Academies say they have freedom in educa-

EXCLUSIVE

■ BY NICK AMES

tion – well, in Kent we have always prided ourselves on the freedom in education which all schools have enjoyed."

Cllr Hohler cited one example of what she considered to be best practice in schooling co-operation:

"The relationship between Folkestone School For Girls and the Marsh Academy is one that has been incredibly successful. Pupils can swap between schools for courses, and new teachers, when they sign a contract, say they are available to work in both. This is the way standards are raised for both staff and pupils."

Co-operation between primary and secondary schools is also important, says Cllr Hohler.

"It is obviously in the interests of the secondary schools to ensure children come to them able to make a smooth transition from primary education," she said.

"Then there is the question of schools in rural areas – and Kent is largely a rural county. We have no big cities, like, say, Birmingham. Low pupil numbers can be a problem in village schools, so a sharing of facilities is obviously the way forward."

Although a strong believer in the role KCC can play in education – Cllr Hohler was deputy leader of the authority under Sandy Bruce-Lockhart and has represented Malling North since 1989 – she does want to work alongside those establishments who decide to move away from its control.

She said: "Whether schools are academies or not, they need to co-operate for those they are set up to serve – the pupils.

"I am not going to say whether academies are good or bad. But those that opt to become so should look at the financial side and its sustainability. They also have to look at what would happen if there is a different government. That could see widespread changes to how they operate.

"We are in the middle of a revolution in education. Schooling is becoming more and more competitive and we need to ensure – as KCC – that the services and support we offer are as good as they can possibly be.

"We have been told that one of the keys to a school's success is good leadership, and we can help there.

"Kent schools benefit hugely from working together – and we want to ensure academies benefit from that as much as any other school.

"And of course any school that wants to stay with KCC – we welcome them."



CALL FOR CO-OPERATION: Sarah Hohler is keen for all types of school to work together

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Education for Kent

Office experts hit college target

■ BY NICK AMES

STUDENTS at Thanet College are now able to benefit from top-drawer facilities in their business centre.

Installation experts Kent Office Solutions (KOS) worked through the sub-zero temperatures and snowstorms that hit the county during the winter to meet the deadline for the new equipment.

Now students at the college can take advantage of a range of equipment and excellent surroundings in which to undertake their studies.

The Canterbury supply firm was employed by Training Solutions, Thanet College's Business Training Centre, to kit out a new plot at Manston Business Park.

The job was to furnish the college's reception, as well as break-out areas and training rooms on the ground floor and a mixture of workstations, hot desking, meeting areas and archival storage to the first floor.

Initial meetings were held in early October, when only the outer structure of the training centre was in place.

In the following weeks, plans were exchanged by email to provide a definitive layout of the premises, enabling other contractors to place equipment in the most appropriate places. Products were then selected for each of the working areas, based on cost-effectiveness and versatility.

The new facilities were praised by college

PULL UP A CHAIR: A room at Training Solutions, kitted out by Kent Office Solutions; inset, Adrian Ponting, managing director of KOS



director of business development Karen Evans.

She said: "We selected KOS to work with as they gave us the confidence at the outset that they could meet all our requirements and expectations, including delivery within a short lead time."

"We wanted to deal with a local company and were pleasantly surprised that KOS had the capabilities to handle a significant project effortlessly."

"From taking the initial brief, right through to installation, they understood completely what we were trying to achieve."

"They came up with stunning designs and innovative solutions, especially the mobile storage and housing units, which are now known affectionately as 'puppies and kennels'."

"Despite continual reassurance from KOS, the greatest surprise came when delivery and installation were carried out on the promised day, despite the huge amount of snow that we had all suffered over the previous weeks."

"The excellent service did not finish with the installation. As with all these things, there were snags. In one of the training rooms it was discovered that some structural pillars protruded in the room, which was not shown on the original plan."

"Without fuss or additional cost to Thanet College, KOS went back to the drawing board and came up with a solution to modify the bench desks to fit the slightly smaller wall space, without compromising working area."

The plans saw training rooms equipped with

a mixture of bench desking for IT training, meeting tables and smaller tables capable of being moved for examination purposes.

The reception was designed to match the finish of all other furniture supplied, together with housing aluminium to match the staircase.

Bespoke mobile pedestals with handles were designed for the field workers, together with housing units in the archive room for storage.

KOS saw the final delivery of products on the target day and finished the job, despite the need to work around other contractors putting finishing touches to their installations.

Ms Evans said: "Full marks to Adrian Ponting and his team for a truly professionally managed project."

University with city at its heart

EXCLUSIVE

■ BY NICK AMES

CANTERBURY'S reputation as a city of academia has led to an influx of students from across the world to GAU American University, which opened its doors just 16 months ago.

Founded by Turkish Cypriots, the higher-education establishment has been explaining to the wider world what the city offers in the field of learning.

Delegations have just returned from Bulgaria and China as the university seeks to expand its student base.

Visits to schools have been arranged for Turkey, Jordan and the Palestinian Territories to show young people why they should consider the Kent cathedral city.

Already it has attracted people wishing to learn business, commerce, industry and English from countries as diverse as Georgia, Nigeria and The Netherlands.

Its founder was Serhart Akpinar, who recognised the excellence of Canterbury as a seat of learning when visiting his daughter, who was studying in the city.

Chief executive of the GAU is Ufuk Ozaktanlar, who said both he and Mr Akpinar had "fallen in love" with Canterbury and the rest of Kent.

"I actually studied at Wye College, just down the road," he said. "But when the opportunity came up for a job here, I knew I had to take it. I had fallen in love with Kent – now I have also fallen in love with Canterbury."

The courses offered at GAU are tailored towards commerce and business.

"They are very much about the here and now," said Mr Ozaktanlar. "What is so good about being here is that there are so many other educational establishments we can work alongside."

"We use the library at Canterbury College



DRAWN TO CANTERBURY: From left, Emma Bliss, Emre Kaimack and Mehdi Chennawi of The GAU American University; right is university chief executive Ufuk Ozaktanlar

and arrange visits to King's School. After all, the students we have are the entrepreneurs and money-makers of tomorrow – where better for them to send their children?"

Teaching English is obviously a key part of the college's work, says lecturer Emma Bliss. "The students come to us really wanting to learn," she said. Sometimes they will move on to other universities that offer the courses that we don't."

One of the key courses offered is in the field of architecture and the restoration of old buildings.

Mr Ozaktanlar said: "There is such a wide range of old buildings and styles in Canterbury, it is the ideal place to teach such a subject."

"The students cannot help but learn from the history that surrounds them. I live in a 600-year-old building and hold classes at home in how to restore an old building. The students might go 'urgh' when I bring out the horsehair, but they soon get the idea of working with traditional and appropriate materials."

The love of Canterbury is one factor that unites the group of young people from across the world.



"Recently, some have come up to me and asked 'How can we volunteer to help the city?'," said Mr Ozaktanlar.

"They said they had helped in their home towns to do things such as clean up the streets and want to do it here."

"We are talking to the local authority about how best to do this."



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